SUNDAY
April 12, 2026

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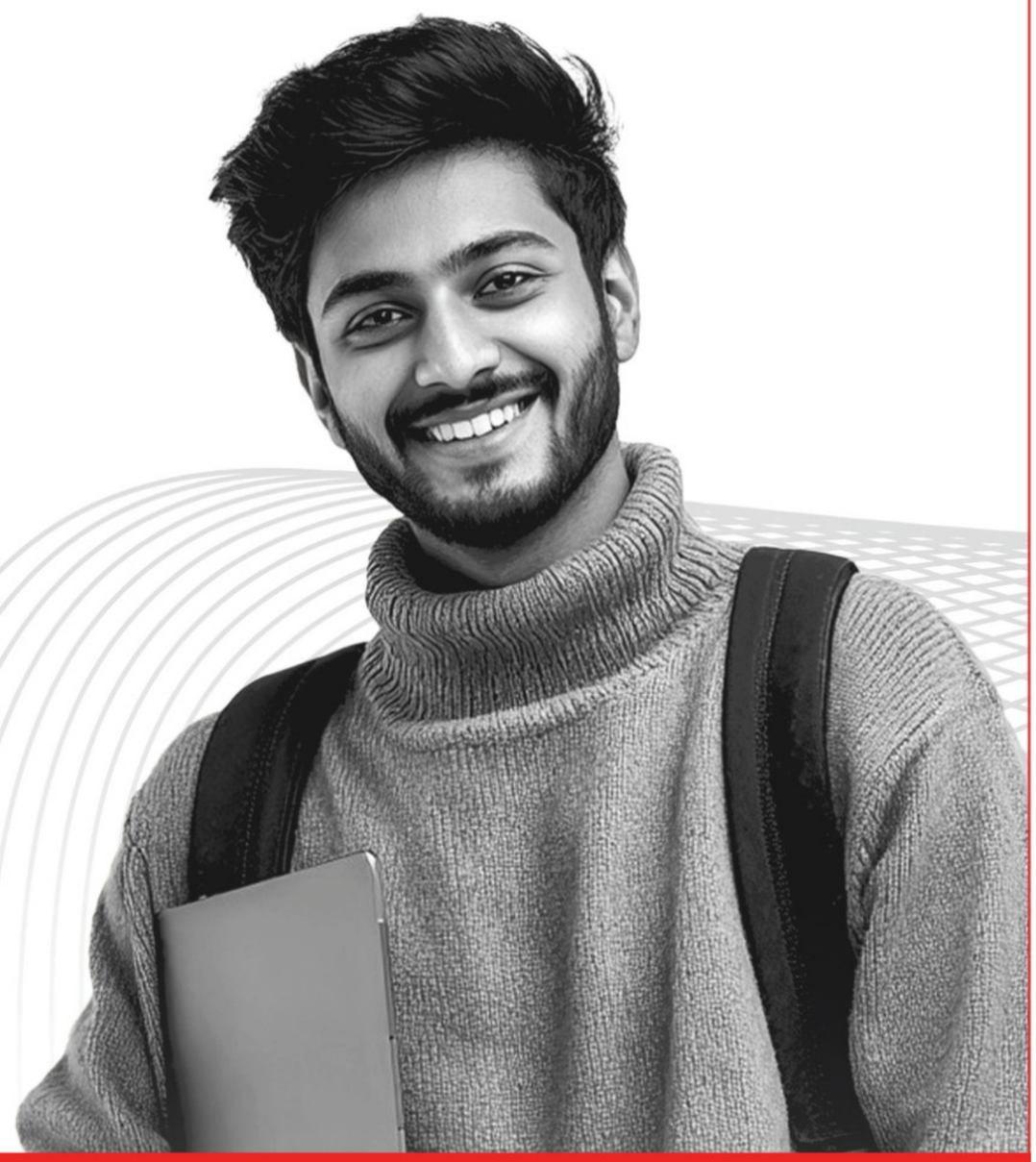

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U.S., Iran hold direct negotiations in Pakistan as fragile truce holds

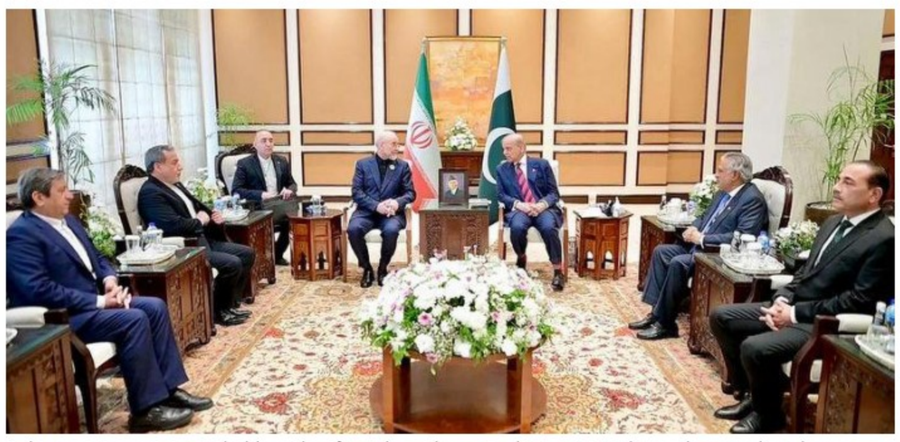
Three-party talks began after Tehran's preconditions, including reduction in Israeli strikes on Lebanon, were met, says Iran; consultations continue despite 'excessive U.S. demands', Tehran insisting on preserving military gains, says Iran's state media

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

The United States and Iran began face-to-face negotiations in Pakistan on Saturday, days after a fragile, two-week ceasefire was announced in the war that has killed thousands of people and shaken global markets.

The White House confirmed the direct nature of the talks, a rare instance of high-level U.S. government engagement with the Iranian government.

The U.S. delegation, led by Vice-President J.D. Vance, and the Iranian delegation, led by Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, met with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif separately ahead of the three-party talks with Pakistan.


Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif speaks with Iran Parliament Speaker Mohammed Bagher Ghalibaf in the presence of other top officials from both countries in Islamabad on Saturday. AFP

Iran's state-run news agency said the talks had begun after Iranian preconditions, including a reduction in Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon, were met.

Iran doubled down on parts of its earlier proposal, with its delegation telling Iranian state television it had presented some of the plan's ideas as "red lines" in meetings with Mr. Sharif. Those included compensation for damage caused by the U.S.-Israeli strikes and releasing Iran's frozen assets.

The Strait of Hormuz remains among the main points of "serious disagreement", Iran's Tasnim news agency reported, adding that consultations were continuing despite what it described as excessive U.S. demands, while Iran insisted on preserving its military gains.

U.S. President Donald Trump, ahead of the talks, accused Iran of using the Strait of Hormuz, a key artery for global energy supplies, for extortion, and told reporters on Friday that it would be opened "with or without them".

While Iran state media said two rounds of discussions were over and a third is expected on Saturday night or on Sunday, the White House said talks were ongoing late on Saturday.

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» PAGE 8
REACHING THE DEAL
» PAGE 13
WARSHIPS TRANSIT HORMUZ
» PAGE 15

NEARBY

Infighting: KPCC minority cell chief resigns

BENGALURU
Defiance of the Congress party's directive to campaign unitedly in the Davangere South byelection has triggered infighting, with Abdul Jabbar resigning as KPCC Minority Cell chief. » PAGE 6

Fee hiked for govt. quota engineering seats

BENGALURU
The fees for government quota engineering and architecture seats in private engineering colleges in Karnataka will increase by 7.5% for the year 2026-27. » PAGE 5

CLASSIFIEDS » PAGES J2 & 4
MAGAZINE » 8 PAGES

Beyond the moon and back

Successful voyage: Crew members of the Artemis II lunar flyby mission, pilot Victor Glover and mission specialist Christina Koch, after being extracted with their fellow astronauts from the Orion spacecraft that splashed down in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California on Saturday morning. AP

First Indian vessel crosses Hormuz after U.S.-Iran truce

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

An Indian-flagged liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker, *Jag Vikram*, has crossed the Strait of Hormuz, marking the first such transit by an Indian vessel since a temporary two-week ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran was announced.

Ship-tracking data showed the tanker moved through the strait between Friday night and Saturday morning. The vessel movement was also confirmed by a government statement giving an update on developments in West Asia.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 11

HC orders CBI probe into 'monumental fraud' in acquiring land near Hebbal flyover

Krishnaprasad
BENGALURU

In an unprecedented order, the High Court of Karnataka has ordered a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into what it termed a "monumental fraud" in acquisition of around 50 acres of prime land near Hebbal flyover in favour of a "non-existent" private entity 25 years ago to establish a tourism project which has not seen the light of the day till now.

The court has set aside the entire acquisition process, which was upheld by the court in earlier rounds of litigations, by stating that the newly revealed "fraud" now in the process

of acquisition has now vitiated all earlier judgments that have upheld the acquisition.

Meanwhile, the court imposed an exemplary cost of ₹10 lakh on Lakeview Tourism Corporation (LTC), in whose favour the land was acquired by the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board during 2001-2004.

A Division Bench, comprising Justice D.K. Singh and Justice Tara Vitasta Ganju delivered the verdict on April 10 while allowing the appeals filed by land owners, Krishna Reddy and his legal heirs.

The Bench directed the CBI to register a criminal case for investigation of the offences bringing to book the persons of the government machinery as well as the private individuals who were involved in this "statutory and constitutional fraud".

The judgment reveals a startling chronology of irregularities that the Bench termed as "monumental fraud" on the statute. The project proposal and the application for land acquisition was submitted on June 23, 2000, by one P. Satish Pai on behalf of an entity that did not legally exist then but the application was drafted in a manner that gives an impression that the entity was in existence, the Bench pointed out.

The proposal of 2000 stated that "Unicare Tourist Centre", to be set up at Hebbal and Hebbal Amanikere villages, would comprise a resort, a five-star hotel, an amusement park, water park, convention centre, modern shopping complex and service apartments with transit flat facilities, proposed by LTCL.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 7

Good times: A Lanjia Saora man plays the drums during a traditional dance in a village in the Eastern Ghats of the Gunupur region in Rayagada district of Odisha

Quenching thirst: A male member of the community drinks a traditional brew after taking part in a cultural performance

In sync: Members of the Lanjia Saora, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, perform a traditional dance.

Double delight: Lanjia Saora women, adorned with large metal necklaces, are seen cheering during a traditional event

Traditions in transition

With a belief system intertwined with nature, and with music and dance intrinsic to daily life, an endangered tribe in Odisha strives to keep its visual tradition intact

K.R. DEEPAK
deepak.kr@thehindu.co.in

The Lanjia Saora community, a particularly vulnerable tribal group living in the forested regions of Rayagada and Gajapati districts in Odisha, continues to hold on to visual traditions that are as striking as they are symbolic.

Living in mud-and-thatch homes scattered across undulating terrain, the community sustains itself through shifting cultivation, foraging, and small-scale farming. Their belief system is closely tied to nature, with rituals, music, and dance forming an integral part of everyday life.

Among the most distinctive visual traditions are their large metal earrings – thick, circular ornaments that are not merely worn but fixed into stretched earlobes, often over years. For the older generation, these earrings are markers of identity and endurance, their weight carried with quiet pride. The lobes, elongated and shaped by time, speak of a life lived in close rhythm with inherited customs.

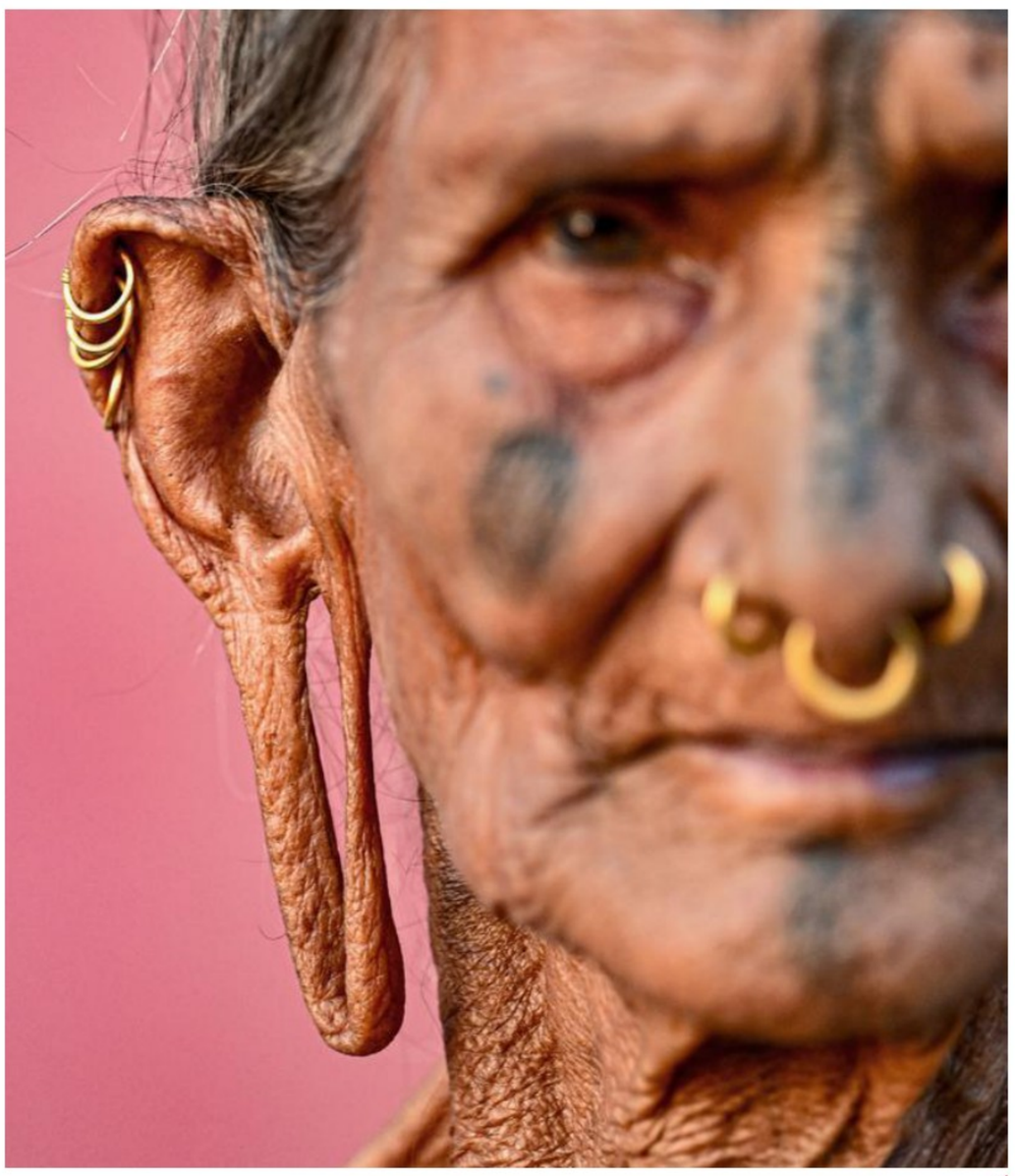
Equally evocative are the tattoos once etched permanently onto the skin. These intricate patterns, often geometric or inspired by nature, were considered both protective and spiritual – an extension of the Saora worldview.

But as one walks through the villages today, a subtle shift is visible.

Among the younger members of the community, tradition is being reinterpreted. The heavy earrings are still present, but many now prefer to wear them as hooked adornments rather than permanently fixing them to the ear. It is a compromise between continuity and comfort, identity and mobility.

The tattoos, too, are no longer always lifelong commitments. Instead, younger members often recreate the motifs using temporary black markings during festivals and rituals – honouring tradition while allowing for change.

This evolving aesthetic reflects a community negotiating modernity on its own terms.



Mark of tradition: An elderly tribal woman with stretched earlobes. A visual tradition marked by wearing traditional wooden ear plugs over several years.

Classifieds

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LIFE MADE SIMPLE

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Matrimonial

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED
BRIDES WANTED
BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED
Classification Common for Brides, Bridegrooms, Brides & Grooms
ASSAMESE
AWADHI
BENGALI
BHOJPURI
BIHARI
CHHATTISGARHI
ENGLISH
GUJARATI
HARYANI
HINDI
KANNADA
KASHMIRI
KONKANI
MALAYALAM
MANIPURI
MARATHI
MARWARI
NEPALI
ORIYA
PARSI
PUNJABI
SAURASHTRA
SINDHI
TAMIL
TELUGU
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MBA/ CA/ ICWA
NRI
COSMOPOLITAN
DIVORCEE
PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED
MARRIAGE BUREAUS
WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

COSMOPOLITAN

SURGEON 35 Christian Seeks Suitable Groom Medical Doctors with Clinical PG or Super speciality Only. 94431 62620, 94434 94626.

29 YEARS/IT Consulting Professional/Christian (RC) open to both Christians and Hindus preferably from Chennai. You may contact: arokiyapaulin@gmail.com or 98414 03226 with your profile and also for receiving profile of the bride.

VISHWAKARMA GIRL, 32 yrs, Height 152cm, Phd, seeks chennai based groom, Ct:9789931336

DIVORCEE

AGE –35, BE Graduate Working, Divorce Muslim Bride, Seeks A Groom in a Good Job. Ct: 9865130076

KIND, ATTRACTIVE, 41, well–educated NRI professional, yet willing to relocate. Seeks compatible groom. Caste no bar. Call/WA 93456 34365.

DIVORCEE TAMIL 41 PQ MNC B'lore seeks qualified Hindu groom in India without issues CNB. ndkp2025@outlook.com

DOCTOR

Christian Girl 29 Year/ 165 cm/ MBBS / MD/ Chennai/ is looking for a suitable match (080-69129265)

Hindu DKV 31/156 Mutal Divorced (No Kids) MBBS, MD (Patho) Coimbatore based Working in Pvt Medical College Hospital 14 Lacs p.a seeks suitable groom (CNB) Doctor or any Professionals. CT: 9894371444

HINDU VALLUVAN upper middle class fair slim 34 years 155cm MBBS, MD, DM 30 to 40 lakhs per annum, star Sadayam Bangalore require MBBS MD with good salary 34 to 37 years. Ct: 9845522122

ANESTHESIOLOGIST M.B.B.S, D.A, Mar1992, Height 165cm, Punjabi Girl, Works in reputed leading hospital in Delhi, Family is affluent, Seeks well settled MD boy. Contact– 8700370949

Brahmin Girl 1999 born / High Class Family / MBBS / Pursuing MD (080-69129284)

BRIDEGROOM WANTED
Hindu - Nanjil, Vellalar Pillai, Age 26, Height 157 cm Magham (Simha Rasi)
Doing MS Opthal in Chennai Fair & good-looking girl from doctor family. Seeking MS/ MD Bridegroom from Nanjil Vellalar/ Vellalar Sub caste.
Contact/ Send WhatsApp: 87781 88699 / 95979 91002

Bride Groom Wanted for DOCTOR
Hindu Nadar MBBS Doctor pursuing MS (OG) – Final Year 25 Years height 5'5", fair and Good Looking Native Thoothukudi District and settled in T. Nagar, Chennai. VIP Family and Rich background Looking for MBBS, MD, MS qualified Groom
rjrhouse201@gmail.com 9487657423 / 9514777115

Hindu Nadar, 32, 165cms, very Fair, Doctor, Cardiology Fellowship. Hailing from highly affluent family. Currently working as a Cardiologist. Instructor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. Lives in US. Seeking an upstanding, well qualified, Professional Groom, preferably a Doctor.
Ct: +91 9791994449 vsajsr@gmail.com

BENGALI

Seeking Alliance from a Genial, eclectic & professionally well-established, South India based Bengali Groom Aged 37-42 years for a Creative and Cultured Bengali Banerjee Faculty, Aged 37, working at a Top Ranking University in Coimbatore. Contact details: rumpa.manjari7@gmail.com

BUSINESS

Beautiful Girl 2004 born/ 163 cm /Affluent Family/ Resident of Bengaluru/ Networth 1000 Cr/ (080-69129289)

COMPUTER / INFO.TECH

Mudaliar/ Pillai, Ayilyam, Dhosham/ 27 Years, Fair, IT/ Contact: 9486356017/ 6380273037

THE HINDU
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IAS / ALLIED SERVICES

Hindu, Tamil, Gounder, 45 years, IPS, seeks Groom, Phone. 9578822036.

KANNADA

HINDU VOKKALIGA Gowda 31, BE from Coimbatore seeks Suitable Groom. Contact: 97917 68175.

MALAYALAM

SYRIAN CHRISTIAN Pentecostal Elite Fly @ Chennai Seeks for their Architect Girl 27y/175cm from Professionally Qlfd Boy (HT>6') 9790893483

HINDU EZHAVA lady Doctor 31/160 working in Germany invites suitable matrimonial proposal. 9496965983

✔ HINDU EZHAVA girl, 26 yrs, 155 cm, Star Aswathy, London educated postgrad, working in reputed MNC. Native Thrissur, settled in Bangalore. Upper middle class family, parents working professionals. Seeking postgrad, Malayali Ezhava groom, MNC employed, from respectable, well settled family. Send photo, full biodata WhatsApp: 9742221346, 9880220199.

NAIR GIRL 92 born ,165cm,MBBS, Atham,seeking Nair groom from chennai/kerala/TN WhatsApp profile 9042526302,No Brokers

HINDU NAIR girl (1/3/2002, 5:15 am, Uthram) Trivandrum, MBA Australia working in Logistics company. Seeking Alliances without or with horoscope. 9526364446.

TAMIL

✔ MUSLIM GIRL 39 well mannered seeks educated, employed, unmarried Tamil Muslim groom. 9444235779

CHRISTIAN, 28, B.Tech, Govt. job, 30 lakhs, NRI. Ph: 8137001253.

CHRISTIAN, 28, Fair, Upper middle class, MD, Doctor. Ph: 8138900312

LOOKING FOR God Fearing, Family Oriented, Canadian or American Citizen, Age 30–35 for a Born again Canadian Citizen Bride Age 29 height 154cm Professional, have Biblical values and Faith. Profile and Photo to rvjplanning@gmail.com / 9677181606

CATHOLIC, 28, Rich / affluent, Chennai circle. 8138900312

CHRISTIAN NADAR, 29, MD, CMC Vellore. Seeks suitable Groom age 30 to 33. Doctors, Engineers, Professionals. 85261 91000, 94453 96996

BORN AGAIN Christian, 45yrs/152, MBBS, MD doctor, seeks christian groom, Chennai. CT – 9500188067

CHRISTIAN, VELLALAR/25/B.E/M.S. looking for affluent professional groom in Chennai and abroad.Ct: 6385359609.

HASTHAM 38 MCA well settled in Chennai seeks prof qualified Pillai/Mudaliar groom. 8925640261/ 8220757159

Hindu Girl only Daughter Very Rich Beautiful 28 innocent Divorcee No Child. Boy should be Hindu below 33 from Elite Government Service or Professional or Rich Business Family preferably from TN. Divorcee Widower or First Marriage Caste No Bar. Send all details to 8081104364 (WhatsApp only) No Brokers

PILLAI VEG 41/172cm CEO Pvt London –Parents Chennai seeks UK Professionals /willing to go to UK CNB Geetham 9884858014

HINDU, 23, Canada, Private, ME, Canada, 80 lakhs. Ph: 8138009235.

WE ARE looking for an alliance for our daughter, aged 30 years, residing in Chennai, height 162cm, MBBS, MHA, Aesthetic Medicine, Hindu, Agamudayar, working in a reputed hospital at Chennai as an Administrator. Kumbam–Sadhayam. Looking for Doctor or well settled business back ground groom. Contact 9739070404 / 9282226820 / archdivyagsr@gmail.com

HINDU, DIVORCED, no kids, 32, BE. Ph: 8137003550

HINDU, 26, Mudaliar, Doctor, BSMS, looking for same community. Ph: 8137003549

MUDALIAR DIVORCE, 30, BE, 160cm Good–looking Well settled family Seeks Groom CNB. 8778514465/ 7200866346

PQM FOR (US Citizen) beautiful girl 2001/177 cm, JD/MBA vegetarian, seeking progressive tall match (182 cm), Hindu, US citizen North East based. Parents well settled Tamil Brahmins. E: mail@gurumyth7064@gmail.com with pics/ details.

GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar,25yrs, BE,SWE,1.5L pm, business family Ph:9841329471,9380791999

HINDI

CA,CFE AGARWAL 26/158cm consultant at MNC(WFH) Fair & Beautiful Girl From Reputed Fmly. Seeking Educated Groom from respected fmly. 8171351626

TAMIL

GROOM WANTED SC (AD), 28yrs,CA, Affluent business family in Chennai Ph: 6369113665

GROOM WANTED CNB, 27yrs, MBA, Well Educated background in Chennai Ph: 9962791888

HINDU, DKV, Er., 26y, April, 154cm/45kg M.Tech, Bosch, Research Er.,1L/pm, eql. Edu & physical status. 98432 24626 / 7598384241

HINDU GIRL 28 yrs Fair Slim BE MS 5 yrs MNC Exp. Working in Bangalore seeks Professional Groom 9444000654

PILLAI 28/162 MS Engineer Bangalore seeks Smart High professional Abroad Ok CNB Geetham 9884858014

GROOM WANTED vokkaliga Gounder, 27yrs MBA,well educated family seeks alliance from Gounder/ Mudaliyar business/ IT in Chennai. 9380791999

GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar 36yrs, B.tech, MBA working in SWE 2Lp/m, divorce educated family Ph:. 9841329471 / ,9380791999

ARCOT THULUVA Velalar Mudaliyar BDS 34 Years Well Settled Family Chennai CT : 6382232024 / 9486531194

RICH NAIDU 33yrs, BE, MBA, Industrial background in Chennai Ph:6369113665

SC ARUNTHATHIAR, 32yrs/ 150ft, Govt. Doctor, MBBS., M.S., seeks suitable Groom.9788153517,6381334373

YADAV, RICH / affluent, MBA, looking for equal profile. 7356483111

RC NADAR, BDS, looking for a Business profile. 8138900316

HINDU, B.TECH, looking for a Canada profile in any caste. 8138009235

MUDHALIYAR, 30, rich / affluent, looking for equal caste in Tamil Nadu and Bangalore circle. 8138900412

PILLAI, 30 lakhs, widow, looking for equal caste in Chennai circle. 8138900553

MUDALIAR/ PILLAI: 22/Beautiful, MBA, Father Industrialist, Elite Family, Only daughter, seeks groom only Business. Ct– 9962530015

MUDALIAR (CNB) : 24/Fair, BE, MS (USA), MNC, SWE, USA, Decent Pay, Elite Family, Seeks Groom Abroad / India.Ct – 8925019776

BHMS (HOMOEOPATHY DOCTOR) Medical Claim Officer UTI Central Government (working in Chennai) Pillai, 17/07/1997, Height: 160cm, Virchigam Kettai looking Groom from same caste, Doctor / Engineer, Good family background. Contact: 98421 06061

TAM.VISWAKARMA,MRIGASIRARA–3, DR.MD 29/168/75–seeks Dr/Er/Qual Ct.8939039380

DIVORCE (NO–KIDS) 43Yrs/M.Sc., M.Phil., Ph.D* Job: Asst. Prof. RC/ SC (AD), Wanted Groom with Decent Profession / Job Caste No Bar 6382135986

SEEKING NEVER married Tamil / Telugu groom age (43–44)working in Chennai or US for Naidu bride–send details to yamini.hari@gmail.com ,SWE contact +91 9543322082/044–31547506

HINDU, SC Chennai, 31yrs, BE, ECE, WIPRO, Sr. Tech Leader, seeks Suitable Alliance. Contact: 9884798695

SUITABLE QUALIFIED Alliance Invited for a Fair and Slim 32year Doctor (Dentist) MDS Vanniakula Kshatriya Girl Working as Senior Lecturer in Chennai. Dhanusu Rasi Star Moolam (4padam) Ct: 9382167197 / 9962781009

GROOM WANTED SC (AD), 27yrs, B.Tech, MBA, Well Educated Family in Chennai Ph; 6369113665

GROOM WANTED CSI Nadar 25yrs,BE,MS Australia,SWE,1.5Lp/m, educated family:9841329471/9380791999

GROOM WANTED Mudaliyar, 27yrs, MBA, Elite business family in Bangalore Ph: 6385293227

MUDALIAR 25/165 Fair, B.Tech, SWE, Cognizant,1000000.PA, Well Settled Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

FASHION DESIGNER SaivaMudaliar Anusham 33 Very Fair Propertied NeedVeg IT/ Govt Employed Groom 9566268349

HINDU Tamil, Sengundhar, Avittam, EEE (Dip) 23 Seeks SWE/Business below 26 groom from same sect having own house. Mob: 94435 10915.

GROOM WANTED Rich Naidu,30yrs, Divorce, MBA,well educated background in Chennai Ph;9962791888

SC AD 25/B.E (EEE) SW Developer (TATA Consultancy) 70,000 pm Fair Girl Seeks Bridegroom. Ph:9444993417

SCA, 29YEARS, B.Tech, MBA (BIM 2019–21)13 LPA seeks Tamil Suitable Groom, CNB, Ct: 9441677205

BRIDES WANTED

COSMOPOLITAN

DM DR(Dec–91/6'1/ Vellala Gounder/ veg@home) seeks a v.fair, virtuous, slim, tall PG Dr / well edu bride from equal caste, at Bangalore. Parents: 9342529547/ 9072118800

36 YRS, B.Tech mgr govt Bank salary 1.5 LPM owning properties in Ch, Seeking alliance CNB. 9940507235

BRIDE FROM a Hindu Community required for a Qualified Software Engineer Employed in a MNC earning good salary Aged 28 – Seeking an employed girl with good family Background Contact : 9840029449

DIVORCEE

SMART GRACEFUL 51 year old divorcee, No Issues seeking caring partner,also without issues, caste no bar. Contact: 9841672014

TAMIL HINDU 55y/173cm BSc, MBA, IT Prof, Australia Citizen, Divorcee. Seeks Bride, WhatsApp: +61422909407

SMART, SINCERE 43, 175cm, positive, ambitious Singapore–based tech professional. Seeks kind, compatible S Indian bride. Call/WA 9345 634 365

FAMILIAR MUSICIAN LECTURER 33 Pillai Mudaliar VEG teetotaller Hastham Music Family Expecting Music Interested Bride Caste No Bar 9384665632

DOCTOR

CHRISTIAN NADAR, Feb 1998, 178cm, MBBS, MD, General Medicine, DM Nephrology (Sri Ramachandra Medical College, Chennai), Seeks MDS, MBBS, MD Doctor Bride. Contact: 9500085244

SC VANNIAR 31/167 super specialist Doctor Trauma Surgeon JIPMER/ AIIMS Delhi well mannered, seeks suitable Doctor bride. Ct: 9445252124

VANNIYAR KULA Kshatriyar MD, 25. Seeks MBBS, MD Bride from Hindu Family. Contact: 9445644311

VISWABRAHMIN BOY, born and brought up in Dubai (37) working in UK as Ortho Surgeon, British citizen, looking girls working in UK. Doctors only. Call: 9061084070.

ENGINEER

Christian Boy / 1996 Born / 175 cm/ M.Tech/ Senior Software Engineer/ Bengaluru (080-69129262)

ENGLISH

IIT Educated Brahmin boy 35/178 settled in Mangalore working in ONGC seeks bride. MP UP Locals preferred. Ct : 7906537840

GOVT / QUASI GOVT

33. 168 cm. Mgr, SBI. Atheist, Christian family. Seeks financially independent, intellectually inclined Tamil/Malayali partner. Caste/religion no bar. Ctct: 9789227517

IAS / ALLIED SERVICES

IRS Officer 31, Fair & Handsome, Rich, OBC, Chennai, Sole Heir, Caste No Bar, Elite proposals Contact: 6381047104.

MALAYALAM

VISHWAKARMA BOY 30yrs/167cm ht, chennai settled ct:9789931336

SUITABLE BRIDE CNB for Malayalam Intercaste groom 40/182 MNC Bosch 30 LPA Coimbatore TN, Innocent Divorcee/homely bridewithout kids also accepted. CT: 88076 59287 & 99524 85996.

TAMIL

MUDALIAR VEG 49/163 Bpt Ch Seek well Settled Groom Pillai Brahmin Widowr with child Ok Geetham 9884858014

Padmasali, F 32,(2nd Mrg) fwd thinking,Int. Designer & Prof.,Seeking Kind Educated, Stable partner. 9790838948

Vanniakula Sthathriyar, BDS, 29, Pooram, Employed in Chennai, looking for Groom Govt, Bank Officer and Professional. Contact: 9841550165.

HINDU NADAR: Age 25 PGDM, very fair, Looking for Chennai Settled Business Family, WhatsApp: 9840907301

REMARRIAGE 42YRS Divorce.+2. Mudaliar Caste No Bar Ct: 7708700879. 9841817000

TELUGU

GROOM WANTED Rich Naidu,25yrs,B. Tech, MBA (canada), Elite Industrial background Ph:6369113665

SAURASTRA

SAURASTRA HINDU: CNB, 40, 1st Marriage, Kanni Hastham, MBA Finance, 1.5 L pm, Seeks Suitable Bride. Parents Contact. 9444735240 / 9381725577

TAMIL

CHRISTIAN, 29, Doctor, looking for any caste in doctor profession. Ph: 7356483111

CATHOLIC 27 /173/ BE/ MNC/ Chennai/ Handsome/ Seeks Educated Girl. Contact: 9025608385

CHRISTIAN, 35/ 170cm, Divorcee, B.E. M.S (USA) Work Permit. Looking for a Suitable Bride working at USA Ct: 9003212573

RC CHRISTIAN, 43yrs/170, B.E. Software Engineer, never married, works for mnc, Chennai. CT– 9500188067

45 UNMARRIED Talented Teetoteller d'ng Business,S'kng,Un married, Christian Woman d'ng Business. 8300559937

CATHOLIC 26/ BBA ;LLB/172/ Infra business/ Chennai. Seeks educated / Spritual girl with business back ground. Ct: 9025608385

CSI CHRISTIAN Nadar, 42, M.E., working in USA SWE, for a handsome divorced Groom Native - Nagercoil. seeks beautiful Bride educated, willing to go USA, 1st or 2nd Marriage. Ct: 09486472450, 09345648649

ADVOCATE–COIMBATORE, 47 years, Male, AD Christian Seeks Bride Contact: 81241 72496

VANNIAR B.TECH Mechatronics,31 Entrepreneur Affluent family.Seek Bride SameComunity.9444453825/94454 29365

HINDU, 31, Masters, 70 lakhs, any caste. Ph: 9048444858

HINDU, 32, Divorced, Thevar, looking from same community in divorced or unmarried. Ph: 9072777811

✔ MUDALIAR, THIRUVADURAI–MITHUNAM, Sep 95 born, 6.1 ft, B.E–CSE, Sr.Dev. Wipro, 18LPA, H1B Cap apln appvd by USCIS, good character & family, well settled boy, seeks well educated & settled, slim & fair, good character & family girl, Ct/WA 94432 28917

VANNIYAR S.PRAVEEN Kumar, BE, 1.20/M, Moola Nakshatram, Dhanush Rasi, Ch– 77. Ct:8610711668 / 9884470377

GAVARA NAIDU Affluent family Chennai 29/165 ME Design Engineer in MNC and Own Business, Rental income also, Star Thiruvonam Rasi Magaram, CNB Call 9841097110

HINDU NAIDU/PILLAI, 30/180, Vishagam, Virchigam, ME, Sr. Engineer, Pvt. Chennai, CNB. Ct: 9840619480.

BRIDE WANTED Mudaliyar,28yrs,MBBS, MD,DNB,Own Transports& Warehouses in Chennai,Affluent family:6369113665

ADIDRAVIDAR AGE 29 BE, MBA Pvt 85000 / well settled wants suitable bride. ct: 8122289871, 9444139323

HINDU MUDALIAR 34/165 M.Tech, Lecturer, seeks good family bride. Caste No Bar. Ct: 9791507303

NAIDU, B.TECH., Age :34, Punarpoosam, Working in Germany Rs.72 Lakhs p/a. Ct:73054 60763

WELL–SETTLED GROOM, aged 48, own house IT employee, needs Hindu bride between 36 to 40. Contact 0413 2968644

40 BE Mudaliyar Chennai Asst Manager, Private. 1st Marriage. Decent Background Ct: 8610518808, 9952010118

TELUGU

HINDU NAIDU 40 yrs 172cm Divorced no children, Well settled educated family seeks professionally well qualified groom from (40-44) Contact no. 9842470621.

Naidu Girl 30/165 cm Aswini pursuing PhD Doctoral studies in Satellite Communications Neuromorphic Computing European space agency Europe-completing by Dec 2026 seeking suitable groom PhD / MS in USA. 98401 03686

NAIDU 23/169 Fair, Beautiful, BE, ASD, TCS, 1000000.PA, Well Settled Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

URDU

MUSLIM PARENTS seeks alliance for their daughter Graduate employed very fair good looking no siblings Divorcee issueless 40Y seeking groom. Ct: 96001 62458

SMU GIRL 28, Height 162cm, Sports Nutrition seeking alliance from well settled family, Chennai 9840189869

TAMIL

HINDU, VVIP, looking for a royale and Good looking profile in south districts (any caste). 8137003550

HINDU, 34, ME, Brahmin, 45 lakhs, looking for equal profile. 8137003516

PILLAI SOZHIA Vellalar 34 yrs Poosam Kadagam Raghu-Kethu Non Veg. Lead Engineer in MNC at Coimbatore, one Lakh pm. Seeks suitable educated Bride age 27-30. Ct: 9443859181.

HINDU NADAR 29yrs, B.Tech, MS,SWE, 2 Lp/m,well educated family 9841329471,9380791999

MUDALIAR 42Y/180CM Wheatish, BSc.(Elec), Credit Manager in Reputed Co, 8Ls PA, 1st& Late Marrg 9395398624

PARUVATHARAJAKULAM, 26 years, Chartetered Accountant, PrivateCompany, in Chennai. Contact: 9176029539

HINDU–BE, SWE, 34yrs, 172cms, 33LPA, Ayillam – Kadagam settled in Bangalore, financially stable and educated. Looking for suitable Bride from educated family. Ct: 9845401461.

BRIDE WANTED Rich Mudaliyar,33yrs, BE, MBA,35 lakhs PA, well educated family in Chennai 9952619776

AUDITOR/ 46 Chennai/ Seeks Any Vegetarian Hindu Girl. Contact : 9884398109

MUDALIAR 30/185 H–some, B.Tech, PG–IIT, TESLA, USA,175000.USD. PA, Affluent ,CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

CHENNAI MUDLR. PhD Tetolr Divorcd, 42yrs 170cm GM Chess Govt 24L/ Yr Educ Simple Any Cast.girl 9884171419

ARYAVYSYA, 44/180, MNC, Mumbai, Property in Chennai, CNB. Contact: 9841551772

PILLAI 38 Govt Officer Swati/Thulam looking bride 2nd Marriage from BC only 9597331609

SCA, 32YEARS, M.E (PSGCT), MBA (SIOM 2020–22)18 LPA Seeks Tamil Suitable Bride, CNB, Ct: 9441677205

MUDALIAR (CNB): 32/ Handsome, MBBS, MS Gen.Surgery doing in USA, Elite Family, Only son, Seeks Bride India / Abroad – Whats app call only 9841718205 (Mother) / 8925019776

AUS CTZN Tamil Brahmin Kashyap June 1973 Groom invites Brahmin Brides. +91 99620 02012

BRAHMIN IYER Boy, 32/170cms, B.Tech, TCS Chennai.seeks Brahmin Graduate Girl. Simple marriage. 9940352807

HINDU, 40, Doctor, first marriage seeks any degree brahmin girl. C:9384448388

LOOKING FOR Alliance for IYER GROOM 45, B.A. LL.B. Born, Educated and Settled in Mumbai with own residence, working with Father in 30 year old Family Business. Is a Mridangam and Ghatam Artiste Expect Bride to be ideally Graduate and with interest in Carnatic Classical Music Vocal or Instrumental. Contact: dramasanthosh@gmail.com , Mobile No. 9920052977

Seeking BRIDE for Bridegroom
Hindu, Kulalar/Udayaar, 44 yrs, 170 cms, M.Tech, IT professional, Caste open for discussion. First Marriage Only
CT: 93842 76066

BRIDE WANTED for Boy Born Aug 2002, Slim, 170cm- Poosam 1 Patham Kadagam - B.Tech IT 2024 Chennai, Working in TCS at Chennai - Parents, Tamil Iyer, Brahmin, Vadamal, Kousigam, Yajurvedam, North Arcot (Native Munjurpet, Vellore) -Settled at Chennai - Only Son - Seeks Suitable Bride from same caste - Respond with full details: giridharanmr@gmail.com Mobile: 97914 32784

Hindu Nadar 26-years 183 cm MTech, Private Company Contact - Phone. 9443781438

Muslim, BE Civil Engineer, doing Construction Business, Studied MBA (HR) Also. Only Son Age 26, Ht 177cm Own Houses & Shops with rental income. Affluent well educated parents of good status, reputed family & Religious Values seeks Suitable bride. 8925227694

Sengunthar, 29/165 cm BE, Asst. Manager in Govt. Bank, Chennai. Contact - 9444449753

✔ MUDALIAR 36/174 CHN IT Emp seeks Hindu Girl Contact :- 9790877562

GAVARA NAIDU / born 2000/ M.Arch. Architect & Valuer / Own Business / Well Settled / Native Kumbakonam Seeks Bride Ct : 9940787620.

TAMIL

BRIDE WANTED

Alliance invited – Tamil Hindu, slim and handsome groom aged 29, height 180 cm, MD-Neurology Resident, in USA, J1 visa holder, Financially secure and independent, gives importance to active lifestyle and physical fitness, only son of professionally qualified, affluent parents based in Chennai. Looking for slim, professionally qualified, bride working in USA or willing to migrate to USA. Broadminded groom, Religion / Caste/ Language no bar.

Contact WhatsApp: 9840671046, Email: vallichinnamani@gmail.com

BRIDE WANTED
40 years, 170 cm, Ayilyam, kadagam, 15 Lacs pm income, Hindu/widower with one male child/Vanniyar, rich & disciplined Graduate from Reputed Family. Knowing English, Tamil, Gujarathi & Hindi. **Seeks Fair bride below 37 years, Unmarried / Divorcee No issues from BC/MBC/FC**
Contact: 9443244060

TELUGU

NAIDU 32/180 fair MBBS MD (Aero space medicine) Rich & affluent family Chennai. Caste No bar. 9841044646

NAIDU 37, BE, ECE, Quality Engr in Pvt Company Well Settled Family in Chennai. Caste NoBar 8939090211

THOGATAVEERA KSHATRIYA 27/164 Technician (SK) Indian Navy (Civilian), Mumbai, seeks Govt Job or well settled bride. Ct: 9342007897

BALIJA NAIDU Parents Settled in Australia / Masters / 31 / 185Cms / Fair Handsome Well Settled, Gud Fmly Values, Invites Alliance from Similar Background. Ct:+91 73053 50270

BRIDE WANTED for an educated and employed US citizen. HINDU / Naidu / 28 yrs / 193 cm / Engineer. Ph: 9994363830 / 9600022622.

NAIDU 28/188 Handsome, B.Tech, MS, SWE, NVIDIA, USA,150000.USD.PA, Affluent, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

Hindu, 57 Years 168 cm, BA Business Retd. Employee Veg. seeks Bride with Good Humanity, from Bombay, Delhi, Hyderabad. No broker. CNB, Call: 8076799867 / 9533946711.

Balija Naidu Jul '97 V.Fair | 5'.4" | BE,MBA IT Bengaluru. Seeks well Educated and Working – preferably Bengaluru / Chennai. Ph: 9952057740

TELUGU

Working in the USA, 34 Years,183 cm tall, earning Rs. 2 Cr p.a., divorced. Belongs to a Highly Educated and Respectable Family. Father is a High Court Advocate, Mother Household, Younger Brother, completed MS. Seeks a good-looking, Bride, fm OC/BC Communities only, a decent and jovial, family. Cont:What'sApp only 99592 98938, jkrishnam@gmail.com

Hindu Boy 1997 / 180 cm/ Businessman/ Naidu / Chennai Resident / Income 5 Cr/ (CNB) (080-69129276)

URDU

PHD BIOTECH professional working as Research Associate in Bangalore, APR 89,170 cm, seeks (SMU) qualified, working girl – 9445714602

SUNNI MUSLIM, Urdu speaking, 34/ 167 cm, tall and handsome from a well settled, small family employed in a MNC as FM in Chennai is looking for a suitable bride from well educated families. Contact 9080098325

Muslim Boy 1994 / 180 cm / MBBS / Surgeon / Doctor/ is looking for a suitable match (080-69072050)

MARRIAGE BUREAU

US UK Canada All Caste Religion 1st Marriage Remarriage. Ct:8248757840

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LIFE MADE SIMPLE

‘₹100 cr. spent daily but where does the money go?’

The mismatch between rising public expenditure and continuous civic problems was the theme for the third edition of ‘The Bengaluru Debates’ held at the Bangalore International Centre

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While Bengaluru continues to make headlines for pothole-ridden roads, traffic congestion, and even flooding and water shortages, more than ₹100 crore is being spent on the city every day, yet there is no official record that clearly shows where this money goes.

This mismatch between rising public expenditure and continuous civic problems was the theme for the third edition of “The Bengaluru Debates” held at the Bangalore International Centre in collaboration with Janaagraha, where discussions focused on whether “Radical transparency can transform Bengaluru”.

Janaagraha said they estimated Bengaluru’s public expenditure at ₹38,455 crore for 2021-22, more than ₹100 crore a day. However, these numbers had to be reconstructed by piecing together data from over 70 documents and does not exist in any official document or website, highlighting the absence of agency responsible for tracking total city-level spending.

Janaagraha says they estimated Bengaluru’s public expenditure at ₹38,455 crore for 2021-22, more than ₹100 crore a day. K. MURALI KUMAR

During the discussion, Abdul Wajid, president of the District Congress Committee (DCC), Bengaluru North, and former councillor; Meera K., co-founder and trustee, Oorvani Foundation; and Padmanabha Reddy, former Leader of the Opposition, BBMP, and former councillor, were present with Janaagraha CEO Srikanth Viswanathan.

The exercise, as per a report by Janaagraha titled “Public expenditure in Bengaluru” said it exposed how fragmented Bengaluru’s public finance system is. Public money flows through at least three channels- the city government (earlier the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, now split into five corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority), State government departments such as health and education whose budgets do not specify city-level spending, and a wide network of parastatals- government-controlled bodies handling core services like water, power, transport and urban development.

With no consolidated system, even identifying who spends on the city required mapping 29 public authorities, of which only a subset could be analysed due to lack of reliable data, it said.

The estimate of ₹38,455 crore itself, the report highlighted and participants discussed, is conservative. Several departments were excluded because they do not publish Bengaluru-specific data, and in many cases, spending had to be attributed using proxies such as population share, service coverage, or project location. The analysis relied on a mix of budgets, annual reports and audited financial statements, using actual expenditure wherever available, and reconstructing figures where it was not.

Where does the money come from

Public spending in Bengaluru (2021–22)
₹38,455 crore

20% by government; 80% by parastatals
Public money channels – City government (GBA), State government, parastatals

Public authorities & share of spending

Bescom: 47.30% | BMRCL: 13.40% | BWSSB: 8.80%

Source: Janaagraha report

Only 20% spending

The data shows that only about 20% of Bengaluru’s public spending is routed through the city government, the only directly elected and accountable body. The remaining nearly 80% is spent by parastatals such as the Bescom, BMRCL, BWSSB, and BMTC. Among these, the Bescom alone accounts for around 47.3% of total spending, followed by metro and water utilities at about 13.4% and 8.80% respectively.

The report reflected that on an average, parastatals disclose just 34% of their financial information. While the BBMP had a relatively higher disclosure level of around 80%, even that leaves significant gaps. Several agencies perform far worse- the BWSSB discloses about 20%, while bodies such as the BMRDA, Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) and Bengaluru Smart City Limited disclose as little as 13%. At the extreme end are agencies like Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) and Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE), which have virtually no public disclosure. The B-SMILE, despite being set up with an outlay of around ₹7,000 crore and receiving allocations exceeding ₹3,200 crore in 2026-27, does not even have a functional website.

Currently, only three of the 12 major parastatals- BDA, BWSSB and BMRDA- are required to publish financial data under their own laws. Others are not obligated to disclose such information because they are “unlisted” entities.

Key reforms

To address these gaps, Janaagraha report proposed three key reforms- bringing all public authorities under a common fiscal transparency framework, creating a unified city-level dashboard that consolidates spending across agencies, and publishing granular, project-level data. It also recommended making data available by sector and ward and ensuring that all information is proactively disclosed in machine-readable formats.

Immediate release of SIT report on Dharmasthala cases demanded

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Women’s groups and concerned citizens, under the banner of the “Kondavaru Yaaru? Who Killed Women in Dharmasthala?” campaign, on Saturday released an open letter to Kusumavathy, mother of Saujanya who was raped and murdered near Dharmasthala in 2012, recognising her courage in pursuing justice for her daughter.

Expresses solidarity

The letter expresses solidarity with her 14-year-long struggle and acknowledges her decision to approach the Supreme Court, which has now admitted her petition for reinvestigation and directed responses from the State government and the CBI. Her fight, the letter notes, has moved beyond personal grief to become a powerful symbol of resistance against violence and injustice faced by women.

Campaign has raised serious concerns regarding the ‘lack of transparency’ in the investigation into over 70 alleged cases of rape, murder, etc.

The campaign also raised serious concerns regarding the “lack of transparency” in the investigation into the over 70 alleged cases of rape, murder, disappearances, and unnatural deaths of women in and around Dharmasthala.

Senior lawyer S. Balan, Gouramma of Janavadi Mahila Sangathan, Mamata Yajaman and Madhu Bhushan of Naveddu Tandana Vedike, Jyoti A. of NFIW and Mallige Sirimane of Mahila Munnade addressed this issue at a press conference.

No report made public

It was pointed out that despite the constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) on July 19, 2025, and a formal request by the State Women’s Commission on October 31, 2025, seeking a progress update, no report has been made public. The campaign demanded that the SIT immediately release its progress report.

Institutional lapses

Mr. Balan referred to the Karnataka High Court’s order dated March 18, 2026, directing the State to submit full details of 74 unnatural deaths in the Dharmasthala region. Mr. Balan pointed to serious institutional lapses in the investigation process, including failure to register cases as per procedure, mishandling of unidentified bodies, hasty cremations, and suspicious deaths of witnesses.

Relief for commuters as Silk Board flyover set to open fully, but bottleneck likely

Pratyusha Srivastav
BENGALURU

Bengaluru’s first double-decker flyover in the southern part of the city is finally ready to be fully operational, but an inspection by the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) has revealed a likely bottleneck at the first junction (Aurobindo Junction) after the end of the down ramp near Ragigudda.

Now, the BTP has planned interventions such as increasing signal pass time and closing two left turns after the down ramp during peak hours, among others, to tackle the situation.

The 5.1-km double-decker flyover connecting Ragigudda, BTM Layout, HSR Layout, and vice versa was partially opened for vehicle movement in 2024. A section of the flyover from Silk Board towards Ragigudda has remained non-operational, but the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is planning to open the stretch this month. In the run-up to the opening, the BTP, along with other departments, held an inspection last week.

A view of the double decker flyover near Silk Board in Bengaluru on Friday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Increased duration

A senior traffic police officer told *The Hindu* that at the end of the down ramp near Ragigudda Metro Station, traffic from Marenahalli Road also converges, possibly creating a bottleneck at the junction that follows.

According to the officer, the major reason is that the flyover helps commuters bypass five signals- 16th Main signal, East End signal, 28th Main, 29th Main, and 8th Main- which means a substantial vehicle load will descend the ramp.

“Besides, just before the junction, there are two left turns which commuters will try to access, further slowing down the oncoming traffic. They will try to take this left because it will save them one signal at the junction,” the officer said.

So, the traffic police have now planned to increase the duration of the green signal for traffic exiting the double-decker down ramp. This will ensure that vehicles do not clog the junction. Additionally, the police will likely close the two left turns before the junction during peak hours so that micro-level congestion is eliminated.

Another officer from the South Division told *The Hindu* that even when the other side of the flyover opened in 2024, there was a sudden spike in the number of vehicles using the route because it provided seamless connectivity.

“Even now, users will use this flyover extensively, so travel time can be cut by at least 30%, especially for those accessing the flyover from the Silk Board Junction,” he said.

Peak hour chaos

Raju, an auto driver who usually operates in the Silk Board area, said traffic during peak hours gets so bad that a vehicle can get stuck in one place for half an hour. “If they inaugurate the flyover soon, it will be a great relief for many of us because traffic at the junction will move faster,” he said.

The crossroad of the East End Main Road and Marenahalli Road, with four signals, experiences heavy congestion throughout the day, said a daily commuter. Subhash, a juice shop owner at the East End Circle, said, “The opening of the flyover from one side has reduced traffic a little, but it is not much of a relief until it becomes completely operational.”

Ishaq, a commuter who works near the East End Circle, said, “During peak hours, it takes at least 10 to 12 minutes for vehicles to move, otherwise it takes roughly four minutes because of the signal. Since these roads connect major areas with many offices, they are usually congested.”

Meanwhile, the delay in opening the flyover has led to the stretch being used as a jogging track. It has become so popular that it is even marked as a jogging track on Google Maps. In addition, many people have begun using the stretch to perform wheelie, according to the traffic police. A BMRCL official said that final clearances are being completed and the flyover will open soon.

Kristu Jayanti University holds media conference

BENGALURU: The Department of Media Studies at Kristu Jayanti (Deemed-to-be university) here recently held a two-day international media conference titled “Media, Culture and Identity: Exploring Global Narratives and Intersections”.

Vice-Chancellor Augustine George highlighted the powerful role of media in constructing and representing identities. Nagesh Prabhu, senior journalist at *The Hindu*, Bengaluru, spoke on the transformation of journalism and the expanding role of digital platforms. Dr. Swapna Gopinath from the Symbiosis Institute of Media and Communication, Pune, spoke on contemporary digital narratives surrounding womanhood and identity.

EDUCATION HUB
A Business Initiative

M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (RUAS), Bengaluru, Launches Mental Wellness Club “MANNASU” and Hosts Workshop on Holistic Wellbeing

RUAS, Bengaluru, inaugurated its Mental Wellness Club, MANNASU, alongside a two-day workshop titled “Wellbeing 360°: Mind, Body & Purpose”. The initiative aimed to promote mental health awareness and holistic wellbeing among students and faculty. The event featured expert-led sessions on stress management, mindfulness, nutrition, and resilience, with participation from over 230 attendees. Engineering and Technology. The event was graced by Chief Guest Dr. Seema Mehrotra, Professor at NIMHANS and Member of the National Taskforce Committee on Suicide Prevention in Higher Education, who emphasized the importance of structured mental health support systems in universities. Supported by the Ramaiah Technology Business Incubator, the program underscored RUAS’s commitment to fostering a healthy and supportive academic environment.

Acharya Hosts Grand Launch of VTU Habba 2026 – A Celebration of Youth, Talent, and Culture

Acharya Institutes in Bengaluru launched Acharya VTU Habba 2026, a major intercollegiate cultural festival and the 25th VTU Youth Festival. The event, attended by key dignitaries including VTU Vice Chancellor Dr. S. Vidyashankar, will run from April 8-11 and host 3,000+ students from 250+ institutions across Karnataka. The ceremony was presided over by Sri Krishna Basani Reddy, Managing Director of Acharya Institutes. The event was also graced by distinguished dignitaries including Sri C.B.M. Bhooshan, Executive Secretary; Dr. C K Marigowda, Principal; Dr. Rajesh; and Dr. Bhagirathi. It features academic, cultural, and artistic competitions, along with live performances by artists like Neeti Mohan. The festival aims to promote creativity, talent, and unity while reinforcing Acharya’s focus on holistic student development.

Dayananda Sagar University Partners with NVIDIA for India’s First AI Factory

Dayananda Sagar University (DSU), Bengaluru, has partnered with NVIDIA to establish India’s first AI-first factory with an investment exceeding ₹175 crore. “The collaboration with NVIDIA marks a fundamental shift in how we, as a university, are looking to employ innovation in the field of AI,” said Dr. D. Premachandra Sagar, Founder & Pro-Chancellor, Dayananda Sagar University. Powered by advanced NVIDIA Blackwell supercomputing systems, the initiative aims to enable large-scale AI innovation, strengthen domestic AI capabilities, and bridge the gap between academia and industry. The university also plans to set up industry-focused Centres of Excellence and skill around 20,000 students in AI-driven fields, reinforcing its commitment to future-ready education and cutting-edge research.

Presidency University Successfully Hosts ‘Eunoia 2026’

The School of Commerce at Presidency University successfully organized its flagship Commerce and Management Fest, Eunoia 2026, drawing participation from 280 students representing 17 leading institutions across Bengaluru. The two-day event showcased academic rigor and competitive spirit through seven diverse events designed to test business acumen, creativity, and leadership skills. Key highlights included The Verdict Room, a high-intensity debate forum, and Code Red - Best Manager, which challenged participants’ strategic thinking. Other notable events such as Brand Verse and Hellfire Walk emphasized marketing innovation and personality development. The fest culminated in a grand finale featuring a ?1.5 lakh prize pool, with Kristu Jayanti University emerging as the overall champions. Conducted under the guidance of the university leadership and faculty, the event reaffirmed Presidency University’s commitment to providing a dynamic platform for nurturing future business leaders.

XIME Celebrates Legacy of Excellence with Foundation Day and Maria Philip Debate South India Finals in Kochi

XIME celebrated its Foundation Day on April 8, 2026, at its Kochi campus alongside the South India Finals of the Maria Philip Future Leaders Debate, highlighting its focus on leadership and communication. Founded in 1991 by late Prof. J. Philip, the institute has grown from modest beginnings into a leading business school. The debate saw participation from nearly 300 teams across South India, with students from Global Academy of Technology, Bangalore, winning top honors. Presenting the awards, Mr. Anil J Philip, President of XIME Society, invoked the enduring wisdom of his father, late Prof. Chevalier J. Philip, emphasised to continue inspiring XIME’s mission of shaping committed and self-aware leaders. The event combined academic, cultural, and intellectual activities, reinforcing XIME’s commitment to holistic education and future leadership development.

Inked grace: A Lanjia Saora woman smiles during a cultural gathering; tattoos, often geometric or inspired by nature, can be seen etched permanently onto her skin

Roots and rhythms: Men perform with drums during a traditional dance in a village in Odisha's Rayagada district

Humble sustenance: A woman drinks a traditional brew, sitting next to her mud-and-thatch home. The community sustains itself through foraging and small-scale farming.

The Saora worldview: Rituals, music, and dance form an integral part of their everyday life

In session: Community members take part in a traditional ritual. The group primarily resides in the forested regions of Odisha's Rayagada and Gajapati districts

Generational shift: Community women wearing traditional ornaments. While the senior woman is seen wearing the ear plugs fixed into stretched earlobes, the younger person adorns a similar earring but hung with a string, reflecting the changing cultural practice

Ashwini Vaishnaw approves Vande Bharat sleeper train service between Bengaluru and Mumbai

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has approved the introduction of a Vande Bharat sleeper train service between KSR Bengaluru and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai.

The development was shared by P.C. Mohan, Bengaluru Central MP, on Saturday, after he received communication from the Minister. While the approval has been granted, South Western Railway (SWR) is yet to announce details regarding the train's schedule and route. The train will be run and maintained by SWR. According to SWR officials, the semi-high-speed sleeper service is expected to greatly enhance overnight travel between Bengaluru and Mumbai, providing improved comfort and an overall better travel experience for passengers.

While the approval has been granted, SWR is yet to announce details regarding the train's schedule and route. FILE PHOTO

This will be the second Vande Bharat sleeper train in the country. The first such service, introduced in January 2026, runs between Howrah and Kamakhya.

In a post on X, Mr. Mohan expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Mr. Vaishnaw, and Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti V. Somanna for approving the project, stating that it would enhance connectivity and public convenience.

Vehicles banned on Hulikal Ghat

SHIVAMOGGA: Authorities on Saturday issued a notification banning the movement of vehicles on Hulikal Ghat, following the recent incident in which a mound of soil caved in, resulting in the death of three people.

a-IDEA Association for Innovation Development of Entrepreneurship in Agriculture (Technology Business Incubator)
ICAR-National Academy of Agricultural Research Management
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-500030, Telangana,India.
Phones:(040) 2458 1326, Fax:(040) 2401 5912, https://naarm.org.in

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

a-IDEA, Technology Business Incubator of ICAR-NAARM Hyderabad, is looking for **Business Development Manager and Project Executive (One Post each)** on contractual basis. The details of Job description can be obtained from websites **https://naarm.org.in/announcements/careers/ or https://aidea.naarm.org.in/a-idea-career** Eligible candidates can send resumes to **careers.aidea@naarm.in** on or before 25th April 2026. Sd/- Chief Executive Officer

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MAKE	MODEL	YEAR OF MFG.
DISA	FLEX 70	2006

FLASK SIZE	TYPE
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No. of Moulds: 30 moulds/hr

MACHINE IN WORKING CONDITION

CONTACT : PSG FOUNDRY
COIMBATORE - 641062, TAMIL NADU.
99524 00804 | 99524 01714
purchase@psgfoundry.in | sales@psgfoundry.in | psgrmd@yahoo.com

APPOINTMENTS

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PRINCIPAL

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Send your CV to: office@mnrsecr.in - 89391 99005
AMET KNOWLEDGE PARK, Thenpattinam, ECR

MSEZ Authority,
Office of the Development Commissioner
MEPZ Special Economic Zone,
GST Road, Tambaram, Chennai - 600 045

Advt.No. F.No.01/01/2023/ MSEZA Date: 08.04.2026

CORRIGENDUM

This is with reference to the advertisement published in The Hindu on 01.04.2026 for the engagement of the following positions:

★ Marketing Consultant
★ Program Manager (DEI)

a) The last date for receipt of applications for the above positions is extended to 45 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in The Hindu.
b) The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the post of Program Manager have been revised. The Program Manager position now stands updated in accordance with the revised ToR.
c) Any subsequent corrigendum, amendment, or addendum, including extension of the last date for submission of applications, shall be notified solely through the official website www.mepz.gov.in

For Application format and further details, please visit the website of this office: www.mepz.gov.in

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Programmes after Class 12			
Class 12 (agg.)	95%	90%	85%
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Class 12 (agg.)	95%	90%	-
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For details check the website

Architectural representation of Amity Bengaluru Campus

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BY : 18TH APRIL 2026
CALL : 7303-399-000

AMITY UNIVERSITY BENGALURU, NH 648, DEVANAHALLI - DODDABALLAPUR RD, BENGALURU | E: admissions.blr@amity.edu

Man loses ₹6.39L in fake antique coins deal on Facebook

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 67-year-old resident of Ejipura in Vivek Nagar has allegedly been cheated of ₹6.39 lakh by unidentified fraudsters who lured him on the promise of high returns on the sale of antique coins and currency notes.

The complainant, Ramakrishna Nayak, 67, stated that on April 6, while browsing Facebook, he came across a page under the name "Rahul Kumar Jindal", which advertised lucrative offers for purchasing old coins at high prices.

After noticing the advertisement, Nayak contacted the numbers listed on the page and shared photographs of old coins in his possession. The accused then assured him that the coins would fetch some good amount and sealed the deal for ₹1.70 crore.

Gaining his trust, the accused later asked him to pay various charges, including GST and income tax, to process the transaction. Believing their claims, Nayak transferred money through RTGS, NEFT, and UPI between April 6 and April 7.

According to the complaint, he transferred ₹6,39,000 in multiple transactions. After receiving the money, the accused neither returned the amount nor paid the promised profit, which made the victim realise he had been cheated.

A complaint was lodged on April 8. The police have registered a case and initiated a probe to trace the accused and recover the money through money trail. The police advised people not to fall prey for high returns or lucratives deals from unknown online sources.

Kerala girl's death: Post-mortem report does not indicate anything suspicious, says SP

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The preliminary post-mortem report of the 15-year-old girl from Kerala, who was found dead near Manikyadhara waterfalls in Chikkamagaluru district, does not indicate anything suspicious, according to the police.

Grieving family members after the body of a 15-year-old girl from Kerala was recovered in Chikkamagaluru district. PTI

To a tourist place

Sreenanda, who went missing near Manikyadhara on April 7, was found dead in a gorge near the waterfalls on Friday. The post-mortem was conducted at the district hospital in Chikkamagaluru, and her body was sent to Palakkad, her native place, late in the evening on Friday. She was on a visit to the tourist place along with her family members. When *The Hindu* contacted Jitendra Kumar Dayama, the Superintendent of Police, Chikkamagaluru, the officer stated that doctors did not find anything suspicious about her death. However, they have collected viscera and sent it for forensic examination. "It seems either she jumped off or slipped off," the officer said.

Sreenanda, who went missing near Manikyadhara on April 7, was found dead in a gorge near the waterfalls on Friday

The Chikkamagaluru Rural Police are investigating the case.

'My Vote, My Right' flags mounting pressure on BLOs amidst flawed voter roll mapping

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Raising concerns over the ongoing voter roll mapping exercise in Bengaluru, "My Vote, My Right" group has submitted a letter to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Karnataka, V. Anbukumar, pointing out at procedural lapses, technical glitches, and the risk of large-scale exclusion of vulnerable populations.

The letter, based on interactions with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and residents across multiple localities, also highlights pressure being exerted on the BLOs by supervisory officials to complete the mapping process without adequate support. The BLOs have reportedly cited a lack of proper training, clear guidelines, and standardised protocols, making it difficult to ensure comprehensive and accurate mapping. The complainants also referred to a prior letter dated April 1, regarding the alleged exclusion of voters in Subhash Nagar, claiming that subsequent meetings with Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and senior officials only intensified pressure on the BLOs while holding them responsible for lapses.

'My Vote, My Right' group argues that the burden of an 'unclear' process is being unfairly shifted onto the BLOs FILE PHOTO

The representation argues that the burden of an "unclear" process is being unfairly shifted onto the BLOs, instead of the Election Commission ensuring proper training, sufficient time for the exercise, and public awareness to help voters prepare the necessary documentation.

The BLOs have reportedly cited a lack of proper training, clear guidelines, and standardised protocols

The letter also details issues encountered during the mapping process. Volunteers who organised help desks, including one in Subhash Nagar where around 100 voters were assisted, reported difficulties in locating names in the 2002 voter rolls using the ECI website.

In multiple instances, voters who produced voter ID cards issued in 1995 or 2002 were still not traceable in the 2002 rolls on the ECI website, which displayed "Record not found" despite entering details such as constituency and part numbers.

The letter also points to apparent technical glitches and cases where long-term residents who claimed to have voted at the same booth for decades could not be located in past rolls.

The BLOs have further indicated to the group that due to mounting pressure, inaccuracies are creeping into the data being entered, with errors such as misidentifying familial relationships, which could create complications during later verification stages.

Another major concern raised pertains to notices being issued to voters alleging that their names are registered in multiple locations. The issue is more complicated in communities where people commonly use single names or share widely prevalent names.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby notified that, my client Mr.P C RAMAPPA, has lost Original Sale deed dated 09.06.1978, bearing document No.929/1978-79, Book-1, of Volume 3080, at Pages 116-118, registered at the Office of the Sub-registrar, Bangalore North Taluk pertaining to Property bearing Site No.45, of Sy No.5, Lotte Gollahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk measuring in all 1200 Sq.Ft. In this regard a Lost report No.2149938/2026, was lodged before the Bangalore City Police on 10.04.2026. If any person/s finds the said documents kindly inform the above stated person or address mentioned below. If any person/s misuses the said document, the same is not binding on my client and they shall do so at their own risk.

C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M : 9845846428, 9108784843
E- Mail: rvlaw.76@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is given on behalf of my client Mr. LOKESH N A, Son of Mr. Ashok Kumar N L and Mrs. LALITHA N A, Daughter of Mr. Ashok Kumar N L is intended to purchase schedule properties hereunder owned by Mr. MANJUNATH T R, Son of Mr. Rajappa, ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF the immovable residential Southern portion of the property bearing Site No. 6, presently bearing Bengaluru South Nagara Palike E-Aasthi Khata New PID No. 4971011539, Property No. 115/1/295/1/6, formed in converted Old Survey No.295/1, New Survey No. 295/8, situated at Begur Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, it measures an extent of East to West 35 feet and North to South 25 feet, total in all 875 Square Feet. He having acquired the same vide Absolute Sale Deed Dated 04.09.2023, registered as Document No. BGR-1-05377-2023-24, in Book I, registered before the office of the Sub-Registrar, Begur, Bangalore, from its previous owner Mr. Rajendran Munisamy, son of Mr. Munisamy, My clients is intended to Purchase the said schedule property.

Therefore any person(s) having any claim in respect of the above referred property or part thereof by way of sale, exchange, mortgage, charge, gift, maintenance, inheritance, possession, lease, tenancy, sub tenancy, lien, license, hypothecation, transfer of title or beneficial interest under any trust right of prescription or pre-emption or under any Agreement or other disposition or under any decree, order or Award or otherwise claiming, howsoever, are hereby requested to make the same known in writing together with supporting documents to the undersigned at the office of Ashvik Law Associates, Advocates and Solicitors, within a period of 15 days of the publication hereof failing which the claim of such person(s) will deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned,

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF the immovable residential Southern portion of the property bearing Site No. 6, presently bearing Bengaluru South Nagara Palike E-Aasthi Khata New PID No. 4971011539, Property No. 115/1/295/1/6, formed in converted Old Survey No.295/1, New Survey No. 295/8, situated at Begur Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, it measures an extent of East to West 35 feet and North to South 25 feet, total in all 875 Square Feet and bounded on:

East by : Road; West by : Property belongs to M.B.R. Apartment; North by : Remaining Northern Portion of Site No.6, belonging to Mr. Arogya Swamy. I; South by : Property bearing Site No. 5A.

Sd/-
Ashvik Law Associates,
Office at No 24, First Floor, Sri Rama Mandir Road, Near to Lalbagh Metro Station, Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560004. Mob: 9916590318.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are informed that my client Chinthagunta Mallikarjun Reddy S/o. Peddamalakondareddy Chinthagunta, Residing at 159/57/5, 7th Cross Road, Bhadrappa Layout, Near G.R.Kalyana Mantapa, Bengaluru-560 094, intends to purchase the Site No.14, Property No.933/621/46/2/14, EPID No.3388013012, measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 70 feet, situated at Ambruthalli, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bytrayanapura Ward No.7, Hosala Layout, comes under the limits of BBMP, Bengaluru which is bounded as follows:

East by : Property bearing Site No.15, West by : Property belongs to Muthurayadevara Inam land, North by : Property bearing Site No.17, South by : Road.

From its owner Mr.M.Prasad Raju S/o. Late M.Narayana Raju, Residing at # 2112, 9th Main, 15th Cross, D Block, Sahakarnagar Post, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru - 560 092.

Persons having any right over the said property may lodge their objections/claims with documentary evidence within 15 days from the date of this notice, failing which it would be presumed that there are no claims over the said property.

M.V.J. Law Chambers,
Jayalakshmi M.V.
No.193/5, 3rd Floor, West of Chord Road, 1st Block, 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Mahalakshmipuram, Bangalore –560 086.
Mobile No. 9538305787.
Email – mvjslawchambers@gmail.com.
Place : Bangalore Date : 11-04-2026

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. Y/E.29/2026-27/04
Dated : 07-04-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
(Re-tender) Provision of additional four portal lights for freight train examination for Road 4 & 5 at Sakaleshpur (SKLR) Yard. IRPSM ID : 14.03.42.22.4.52.001	Rs. 15,35,806/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs on 28-04-2026

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/General
PUB/25/AAS/PRB/SWR/2026-27 Mysuru

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South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
(Single Packet System)

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer, Project. North Western Railway, Jaipur for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-Tender. Tenderer shall on-line submit their original/revised offer before the date and time of closing of E-tender. 1. E-Tender Notice No. : NWR/EL/PRO/2x25 kV/25-26/AMC /TW/T-05 2. Name of work with location. : "Annual maintenance contract of Cummins make engines of 4 Nos. 8-wheeler Tower Wagon along with special repairs over 2*25 kV Electrical Project unit /JP of NWR for a period of 03 years". 3. Approximate cost of work. : Rs. 1,79,91,538.60 4. Earnest Money to be deposited : Rs. 3,59,900 5. Completion Period : 36 (Thirty Six) Months 6. Closing Date & Time of submission of on-line E-tender : 15.00 Hrs. on 04/05/2026 7. Website particulars where complete details of E-Tender can be seen : www.ireps.gov.in. Note : No Manual tender will be accepted.

523-CR/26

Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

NOTICE OF INVITING E-TENDER

E-Tender : 51265697 Dated : 09.04.2026 SR.DMM-Jaipur, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites following E-Tender. S.N. : 01 Tender No. : 51265697 Brief Description : Supply of trans receiver, VHF, Hand held Digital walkie-Talkies set 5 watt. Quantity : 412 Set. Date and time for submission of tender : 06.05.26 at 14.25 hrs. Note:- Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders and No any modification advise shall be issued by New paper. Above E-tenders full description is available on ireps website https://www.ireps.gov.in 518-CR/26

Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the public at large, that my clients (1) Mr.SANJAY A SHAH, (2) Mr.AJAY A SHAH, both S/o. Sri.Anil Kumar A Shah, are intended to purchase the below mentioned schedule property from Smt.Jessy George, W/o. Sri.K.C.George.

If any person having any rights, title, claims or interest in the said property, by way of sale, inheritance, possession, succession, mortgage, lien, lease, gift or otherwise in respect of the same, shall intimate the objections in writing to the undersigned with supporting documents thereof within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice or else any such claims by any one shall not be considered and shall be deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned. And my client shall proceed to conclude the negotiations and no claims shall be entertained thereafter.

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Residential Building bearing Muncipal site No.86 (Old No.34), situated at 4th cross, Lalbagh Road, , Bangalore, having present Bangalore central city Corporation E-PID No. 1458192581, Measuring : East to West 50 feet/15.2mtrs & North to South 48feet/14.6mtrs, Totally measuring 2,400sqft/ 221.92sqmtrs, Consisting of Ground floor & First floor Rcc roofed building, measuring 1300sft, with mosaic tiles and Jungle wood.

And Bounded on:

East by : Rajakaluve; West by : 25 feet cross road; North by : Site No.33, South by : Site No.35, Belongs to C.M.Rahmatulla khan.

M.V.JEEVAN KUMAR ADVOCATE
Off at: no no 11, V4GROUP, 6th floor, Krishnanagar layout, Hosur road, Bangalore-560029
Mobile No:9902059999
Place: Bangalore Date:11/04/2026

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar - 841221

E-Open Tender Notice No.:- S/RWP/Advt./E/2026-27/01 dated: 09.04.2026, Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites online "e-Open Tender", through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website www.ireps.gov.in, for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14:00 hrs., SN : 1, Tender No. : 01251025A, Short Description of item : Fused Silica Powder, Quantity : 90000 Kgs., Date of Tender Closing/Opening : 28.04.2026 at 14:00 Hrs., 1. Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is www.ireps.gov.in. 2. The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including Addendum/ Corrigendum/ Cancellation with respect to the above tender. However, this information will also be invariably published in the all concerned newspapers.

For PCMM/RWP/Bela
RWP/CPRO/ADVT/2026-27/02

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person Abdul Gani Sab S/o Gafoor Sab Prop./Authorized Signatory of M/s. Raitha Seve Agro Kendra R/o 35, Village Hayyal (B), Tal. Shahapur, Distt. Gulbarga, Karnataka Also At: Sy. No. 374, Shop No. 28/1A, Near D.C.C. Bank, Yadgir Road, Shahapur, Tal. Shahpur, Distt. Yadgir, Karnataka has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence Case No. 511083/16 u/s 138 N.I. Act at P.S. Darya Ganj, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Abdul Gani Sabcannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Abdul Gani Sab has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proceeding u/s 82 Cr.P.C has been initiated in the case. Proclamation is hereby made that the said Abdul Gani Sab accused of Case No. 511083/16 u/s 138 N.I. Act at P.S. Darya Ganj, New Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on 12.05.2026.

By Order: Ms. Urvi Gupta,
Judicial Magistrate First Class-01 (NI Act)
Court No. 201, Annexe-II,
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/4747/CD/2026

प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान
INSTITUTE FOR PLASMA RESEARCH
इंदिरा ब्रिज के पास, भाट गांव, गांधीनगर–382428, गुजरात, भारत
Near Indira Bridge, Bhat Village, Gandhinagar - 382 428, Gujarat, India
Web : www.ipr.res.in

विज्ञापन सं. / ADVT. NO. 4/2026

प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान पी.एच.डी. (भौतिक)-2026 के लिए आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है
IPR INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR Ph.D. in (PHYSICS)-2026

प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान (आईपीआर), परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग, भारत सरकार के अंतर्गत एक प्रमुख वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान संस्थान है, जो भाट गाँव, गांधीनगर, गुजरात में स्थित है । जीआईडीसी, गांधीनगर, गुजरात में औद्योगिक प्लाज़्मा प्रौद्योगिकी सुविधा केन्द्र (FCIPT) और गुवाहटी, असम में प्लाज़्मा भौतिकी केंद्र (CPP) में इसकी प्रयोगशालाओं का विस्तार हैं । आईपीआर मूलभूत प्लाज़्मा भौतिकी, चुंबकीय परिरोध संलयन और प्लाज़्मा के तकनीकी अनुप्रयोग के लिए अनुसंधान और विकास गतिविधियों में शामिल है । प्रयोगात्मक, कम्प्यूटेशनल और सैद्धांतिक प्लाज़्मा भौतिकी में डॉक्टरेट अनुसंधान करने के लिए अत्यधिक प्रेरित छात्रों से आवेदन आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं।

Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), located at Bhat Village, Gandhinagar, Gujarat is a premier scientific research institute under the Department of Atomic Energy, Govt. of India. IPR also has extension laboratories at the Facilitation Center for Industrial Plasma Technologies (FCIPT) in GIDC, Gandhinagar, Gujarat and at the Center for Plasma Physics (CPP) at Guwahati, Assam. IPR is involved in research and development activities devoted to basic plasma physics, magnetic confinement fusion and technological application of plasmas. Applications are invited from highly motivated students to pursue doctoral research in experimental, computational and theoretical plasma physics.

इच्छुक उम्मीदवार विस्तृत विज्ञापन, पात्रता मानदंड और आवेदन प्रक्रिया के लिए वेबसाइट http://www.ipr.res.in/documents/jobs_career.html (विज्ञापन सं. 4/2026) पर जा सकते हैं।

Interested candidates may visit the website http://www.ipr.res.in/documents/jobs_career.html (ADVT. NO. 4/2026) for detailed Advertisement, eligibility criteria and application procedure.

ऑनलाइन आवेदन लिंक 13 अप्रैल 2026 को सुबह 10:00 बजे सक्रिय हो जाएगा । ऑनलाइन आवेदन भरने की अंतिम तिथि 03 मई 2026 (शाम 05:00 बजे) है।

Online application link will be activated on 13th April 2026 at 10:00 AM. The last date for filling online application is 3rd May 2026 (05:00 PM).

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ
ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕಾಪಾಅ/ಪಂರಾಇಂ/ವಿಯಾ/ಕೆಕೆಆರ್‌ಡಿಬಿ/2026–27/39 ದಿನಾಂಕ:10.04.2026

ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತ ಟೆಂಡರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ) KW-1, & 3
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1) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ.: (1) ಸುರಪುರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ವಿವೂರ ದೊಡ್ಡ ತಾಂಡಾದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿ.ಸಿ. ರಸ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚರಂಡಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಿ.ಡಿ. ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ. RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT23529/CALL-2, (CAT-II(A) Bidders Only) (2) ಶಹಾಪೂರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಸಗರ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಸರ್ವೆ ನಂ.155 ಹತ್ತಿರ ತಡೆಗೋಡೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ. RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT21720 (SC Bidders Only) 2) ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ: 2025–26ನೇ ಕೆ.ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಡಿ.ಬಿ. ಯೋಜನೆ 3) ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಿಟ್ಟ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ: ಕನಿಷ್ಠ 20.00 ಮತ್ತು ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 78.00 ಲಕ್ಷ 4) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ದರ್ಜೆ: 4ನೆ ಮತ್ತು 3ನೇ ದರ್ಜೆ ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು 5) ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.04.2026 ರಿಂದ 22.04.2026 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ 6) ಟೆಂಡರ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಬೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ: ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಮೂದಿಸಿದಂತೆ (ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕು ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲಾ) 7) ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22.04.2026 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ 8) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ಡ್ (ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ– 3): 24.04.2026 ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಗೆ 9:00 ನಂತರ 9) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ಡ್ (ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ– 1): 24.04.2026 ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಗೆ 9.00 ನಂತರ 10) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ಡ್ (ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ– 3): 29.04.2026 ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಗೆ 11:00 ನಂತರ 11) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ವಿಳಾಸ (ಕಛೇರಿ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ): ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ. 12) ಅಂತರಜಾಲ ತಾಣದ ವಿಳಾಸ: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

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Man held after five cows killed, vehicles damaged in a fire

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 49-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly setting fire to garbage that spread to a cattle shed and nearby shops, resulting in the death of five cows and destruction of property in the D.J. Halli Police Station limits on Saturday.

Extensive damage

The incident occurred in the early hours of April 7. According to the police, the fire quickly spread, destroying two plywood shops and a vehicle and four two-wheelers parked nearby.

Based on a complaint, a case was registered at the D.J. Halli Police Station. A detailed investigation led to the arrest of the accused, identified as Irfan Pasha, a resident of the K.G. Halli area. A daily wage labourer, Pasha was apprehended based on credible inputs, and he reportedly confessed during interrogation.

The police said the accused admitted to having a habit of setting fire to garbage. On the day of the incident, he allegedly set fire to the waste at the spot, which spread uncontrollably to the nearby cattle shed, leading to the death of the cows and damaging the property.

The total loss in the incident is estimated to be around ₹15.20 lakh.

State allows 7.5% fee hike for govt. quota engg. seats in private colleges

There will be no increase in fees in government engineering colleges this year

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

The fees for government quota engineering and architecture seats in private engineering colleges in Karnataka will increase by 7.5% for the year 2026-27.

In a recent meeting chaired by Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar with the private engineering managements, it was decided that a fee increase for government quota seats in private engineering colleges by 7.5% would be allowed for the next academic year, said sources.

However, there will be no increase in fees in government engineering colleges. Last year, the government had increased 5% of fee for government engineering colleges too.

The fee for the year 2026-27 would go up to ₹87,935 for CET seats in type-1 private colleges and ₹87,825 for type-2 colleges, besides university registration and other processing fees. Under the COMED-K, type-1 college fee will be ₹2,15,000 and type-2 colleges ₹3,02,182.

Dr. Sudhakar had recently held a meeting with Karnataka Unaided Private Engineering Colleges' Association (KUPECA) and other private engineering college managements regarding the increase in fees for government quota seats in private colleges.

In order to attract students to courses such as Civil and Mechanical for which the demand has fallen over the years, the government had also given a 50% fee waiver. FILE PHOTO

In this meeting, the private college managements said that all costs had escalated due to the West Asia crisis, and equipment maintenance and staff salaries had increased too. Therefore, they had urged the government to increase the fees by 10% to 15% for the next academic year. However, sources said that the Minister had only allowed a 7.5% fee hike for the year 2026-27.

Last year's fee

Last year too, the government had allowed a 7.5% fee hike for private colleges. The fee for the year 2025-26 was ₹81,800 for CET seats in type-1 private colleges and ₹91,000 for type-2 colleges, besides university registration and other processing fee. In the COMED-K type-1 college, the fee was ₹2,00,000 and type-2 was ₹2,81,100.

The fee in government colleges last year was ₹44,200. The fee for constituent colleges of University of Mysore, Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) was the same for the 50% seats. The fees at University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE) was ₹49,600.

In order to attract students to courses for which the demand has fallen over the years, such as Civil and Mechanical, the government had also given a 50% fee waiver.

Fee structure for govt. quota engg. and architecture courses for 2026-27

Type of quota	2025-26 (₹)	2026-27 (₹)
Type-1 private colleges	81,800	87,935
Type-2 private colleges	91,000	97,825
COMED-K type-1 colleges	2,00,000	2,15,000
COMED-K type-2 colleges	2,81,100	3,02,182

Source: Karnataka Higher Education Department

State police to bring back over 3,000 orderlies to active law-and-order duty

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The directive was issued on April 4 by Director-General and Inspector-General of Police M.A. Saleem, with an aim to strengthen field policing. K. MURALI KUMAR

In a major reform aimed at strengthening field policing, the Karnataka Police has decided to redeploy 3,320 trained personnel currently working as orderlies to active law-and-order duties.

The directive was issued on April 4, 2026, by Director-General and Inspector-General of Police M.A. Saleem, who ordered that the use of orderlies be reduced by 50%. Trained constables and head constables engaged in domestic and non-policing duties at the residences of senior officers as orderlies- a colonial era practice- will now be withdrawn and reassigned to core policing roles. Mr. Saleem had earlier, in January, issued orders to implement the State government's decision to overhaul the existing orderly system and introduce an alternative arrangement.

The idea is to get back trained police personnel and assign the job they are supposed to be trained in and abolish the age-old tradition of orderlies, Mr. Saleem told *The Hindu*.

Manpower issues

Officials said that in Bengaluru alone, around 1,239 personnel were working as orderlies and would now return to field duties. The move is expected to address manpower shortages, particularly during emergencies and law-and-order situations.

Under the revised system, officers will be allowed only half the earlier number of support staff. These roles will now be filled by "followers" or Group D employees or housekeeping staff recruited by the reserve forces, who are not trained for policing work.

Officers will also receive a fixed monthly allowance in place of the reduced staff strength. The orderly replacement will be fixed as 50:50 - half the number of orderlies entitled for senior officials will be replaced with followers while the rest can claim remuneration in terms of allowence.

Police sources said the decision was taken after internal assessments revealed that trained personnel were being diverted to non-core duties, affecting operational efficiency. The reform also aims to prevent misuse of orderly postings and end an outdated practice dating back to the British era.

The "orderly system" originally involved assigning constables to assist senior officers with official duties. However, over time, many were deployed for domestic work such as cooking, cleaning, and running personal errands at the residences of these officials.

Officials believe the move will improve policing efficiency, strengthen field presence, and reduce unnecessary expenditure on recruitment and training, and help fill the existing vacancies. This move will also help the State exchequer save money and resources in terms of recruitment and trianing, sources in the department said.

₹15.45 cr. 'digital arrest' scam busted; two held in Hyderabad, key accused absconding

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a major cybercrime breakthrough, Karnataka State Cyber Command police have arrested two accused in connection with a ₹15.45 crore "digital arrest" fraud, while the key accused remains absconding.

The case, registered on March 18, 2026, at the Belagavi City Cyber Crime Police Station, is based on a complaint filed by Ajit Gopalakrishna Saraf, a resident of Tilakwadi in Belagavi.

According to the police, the victim was contacted by a fraudster posing as a senior official of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The caller falsely claimed that two SIM cards issued in the victim's name were linked to Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal, who was allegedly under investigation.

The accused further alleged that the victim had laundered ₹25 lakh through his bank account and earned a ₹5 lakh commission. To create panic, the fraudster threatened the victim with immediate arrest under a so-called "digital arrest" procedure and forced him to cooperate. Fearing legal action, the victim transferred a total of ₹15.45 crore through RTGS between February 7 and March 9, 2026, to multiple bank accounts as instructed by the fraudsters.

Money trail

During the investigation, the police traced the money trail across several States, including Telangana, Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and West Bengal. The highest transaction of ₹2 crore was found to have been transferred to a Hyderabad-based bank account.

Based on leads, a special police team travelled to Hyderabad and arrested two accused-Venkatesh Sharath Naik and Degavat Sripada Naik- on April 6. They were produced before a court on April 7.

Investigators revealed that the accused had received ₹2 crore in a joint account in a private bank and had shared bank credentials, cheque books and internet banking access with another accused who was suspected to be the mastermind and currently absconding.

The police said investigation is under way to trace the remaining accused, track the layered money transfers, and recover the defrauded amount.

Protest after allegations of animal cruelty

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Activists demanded accountability and a closer examination of what they described as a 'disturbing' incident involving community dogs. K. MURALI KUMAR

Following allegations of animal cruelty on the DRDO residential campus, activists came together to hold a protest at Freedom Park on Saturday. They demanded accountability and a closer examination of what they described as a "disturbing" incident involving community dogs.

The controversy stemmed from an alleged incident on March 5, when residents said they spotted someone capturing dogs in an inhumane fashion inside the campus. A video recorded by a resident, who intervened and freed some of the dogs, soon went viral, sparking outrage. The next day, a GBA official visited the campus after complaints. Residents also reported that at least 22 dogs were missing.

"The way they took the dogs did not indicate relocation," said Priya Chetty Rajagopal, trustee of C.J. Memorial Trust. She added that the dogs were sterilised and not known to be aggressive. Actor Ramya, who joined the protest, said that while public pressure was important, the legal route would be crucial to ensure accountability. She said she has written to the Defence Minister seeking a fair inquiry into the incident and safeguards to prevent such actions in the future.

For many residents, the disappearance of the dogs has been difficult to process. Mathangi, who lived in the DRDO township for over 22 years and regularly fed the animals, said the campus felt different after the incident.

Activists say the case points to a larger issue.

Timings
BENGALURU

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RISE 02:14	SET 14:00
MONDAY, APR. 13	
RISE 06:08	SET 18:32
RISE 02:56	SET 14:52
TUESDAY, APR. 14	
RISE 06:08	SET 18:32
RISE 03:36	SET 15:44

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	36	20
Bengaluru	35	25

Bengaluru Today
35°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
36°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant. Dry weather to occur.

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THE HINDU
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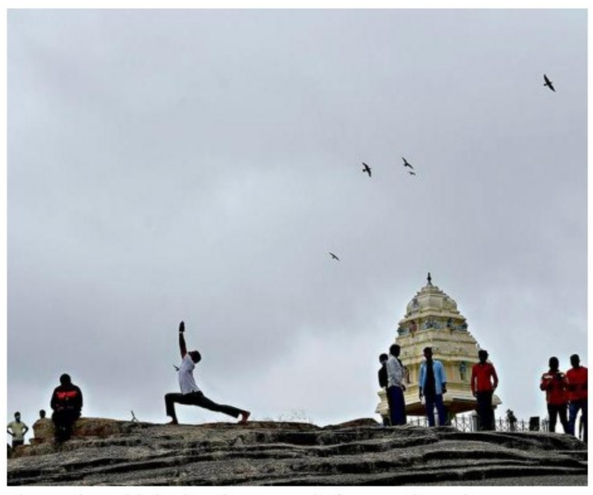
Benefits of yoga differ depending on when you do it

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

Practising yoga in the early hours of the day may offer greater benefits for sleep, mental health and lifestyle habits among young adults than evening sessions, according to a recent randomised controlled trial conducted by researchers of NIMHANS-Bengaluru, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (SVYASA), and Central University of Rajasthan.

The study, published in the *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, examined how the timing of yoga practice influences quality of life, sleep patterns, psychological health and lifestyle behaviour. While yoga is widely recognised as a holistic intervention, the role of practice timing in alignment with the body's circadian rhythm has remained relatively underexplored. The trial was conducted among post-graduate students in Bengaluru between May 2022 and March 2023. A total of 156 participants were divided into three groups: a morning yoga group (6 a.m. to 7 a.m.), an evening yoga group (6 p.m. to 7 p.m.), and a control group. Of these, 82 participants completed the four-week intervention, which involved guided online yoga sessions for one hour a day, five days a week.



The study, published in the *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, examined how the timing of yoga practice influences quality of life, sleep patterns, psychological health and lifestyle behaviour. FILE PHOTO

Both morning and evening yoga groups showed clear improvements over the control group across several measures, including quality of life, psychological health, sleep quality and certain lifestyle behaviour. However, the morning yoga group demonstrated additional benefits in specific areas.

Evening yoga, while broadly beneficial, showed a distinct effect in reducing subjective feelings of sadness

Better sleep, energy

"Morning yoga showed clear advantages in reducing sleep disturbances, and improving overall energy levels," said Hemant Bhargav, from the Department of Integrative Medicine at NIMHANS, who is the corresponding author of the study. "We also observed a shift towards healthier lifestyle choices, including reduced junk food intake, even without direct behavioural counselling," he told *The Hindu*.

Participants who practised yoga in the morning reported a greater reduction in sleep disturbances and a shift towards 'morningness'- a preference for early-day activity aligned with natural biological rhythms. They also showed an increase in traits associated with positive mental health, clarity and balance, along with improved restfulness.

Evening yoga

Evening yoga, while broadly beneficial, showed a distinct effect in reducing subjective feelings of sadness. "Evening sessions appear to support emotional unwinding at the end of the day, which may explain the reduction in sadness reported by participants," Dr. Bhargav said.

The findings assume significance in the context of rising stress levels among young adults, particularly students managing academic and social pressures. Lifestyle factors, such as irregular sleep, poor diet and sedentary habits, are known to affect overall well-being.

The researchers noted that yoga differs from conventional exercise by integrating physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation, thereby addressing multiple dimensions of health. It is also non-invasive, and can be delivered through accessible formats such as tele-yoga.

Circadian rhythm

"Aligning yoga practice with the body's natural circadian rhythm appears to enhance its benefits. Our findings suggest that even a short, structured intervention can influence sleep, mood and behavioural patterns in young adults," Dr. Bhargav said.

Interestingly, the study observed improvements in behaviour, such as reduced screen time and fewer anger outbursts, among participants in both yoga groups, despite the absence of specific lifestyle guidance. The control group, in contrast, showed little change and, in some cases, worsening stress and sleep indicators.

Wellness programmes

The researchers said the findings could have implications for integrating yoga into student wellness programmes and public health interventions. Choosing the time of practice in line with individual routines and biological rhythms may help maximise outcomes, they said, calling for further research with longer follow-up periods and diverse populations.

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Information panel riled over govt. not recovering penalty from errant officials

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Information Commission (KIC) has taken exception to the State government not recovering penalty imposed on officials who have avoided sharing information sought under the Right to Information Act, 2005.

The KIC has so far imposed a penalty of ₹10.38 crore on 10,843 government officials designated as Public Information Officers (PIOs). Of this, just about ₹2.7 crore has been recovered from 3,084 PIOs.

The penalty is mandated for recovery from the salary of the official.

KIC sources said that some of the pending cases date back to 2012. The maximum fine that can be levied under the law for denying information is ₹25,000.

In a communication to Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, a copy of which is with *The Hindu*, Chief Information Commissioner Raman K. has pointed out that the PIOs have shown dereliction of duty.

'Orders are useless'

"Though there are circulars to recover the penalty from the salary and initiate disciplinary action, the department heads have not taken action. This has belittled the Information Commission's order, and people are feeling that the KIC's orders are useless," the letter stated.

In 2014, the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms had issued a circular making the controlling officers in the department responsible for initiating penalty recovery process and remitting the amount to the State treasury.

The circular was issued in 2014 following a similar complaint of non-recovery of penalties, and based on the recommendation of KIC in its 2012-2013 annual report.

These are penalties imposed by KIC on officials against whom a second appeal was moved by the applicant after the first appeal available within the department did not secure the information sought under the RTI Act.

The departments of Rural Development & Panchayat Raj and Revenue & Urban Development are among the 33 departments with the highest number of pending cases. While 3,270 officials in RDPR were found guilty of not providing information and a penalty of ₹2.97 crore had been imposed, the department has been able to recover ₹79.25 lakh from 993 officials.

In the Revenue Department, 2,963 officials were slapped with a penalty of ₹2.87 crore, of which 730 officials have paid about ₹66.63 lakh.

A total of 2,945 officials in the Urban Development Department were were slapped with a penalty of ₹2.89 crore. Of this, 949 officials have paid ₹88.48 lakh.

The only exception is the Public Enterprises Department, where one official was penalised with ₹7,500, which has been recovered.

'No fear of action'

Mahesh Walwekar, one of the State Information Commissioners, questioned the need for orders if the department heads do not take them seriously or implement them.

"What would other officers do when penalties are not recovered from erring officials? They too would be emboldened to deny information. There will be no fear of department action. The importance of the commission is lost if the orders are ignored with impunity," he said.

KIC sources said that when a penalty is imposed, in many cases officials tend to ignore the commission's notices (three notices are issued) to appear for a hearing or do not provide information despite the KIC's order to do so.

"These cases are brought before the KIC by RTI applicants after information is denied at the department level," the sources said.

While some officials are learnt to have paid penalties from their pocket fearing that the penalties would be recorded in their service records, Dr. Walwekar said that as per the law, penalties are to be recovered from their salary.

Cracking the whip

Officials across 33 departments penalised	Total penalty levied across 33 departments	Penalty recovered	Officials who have paid
10,843	₹10.38 crore	₹2.70 crore	3,084

Top three departments

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Dept.	Urban Development Department	Revenue Department
Penalty levied ₹2.97 crore	Penalty levied ₹2.89 crore	Penalty levied ₹2.87 crore
Officials penalised 3,270	Officials penalised 2,945	Officials penalised 2,962
Penalty recovered ₹79.25 lakh	Penalty recovered ₹ 88.48 lakh	Penalty recovered ₹66.63 lakh
Officials who have paid: 993	Officials who have paid: 949	Officials who have paid: 730

Infighting among Cong. leaders: KPCC Minority Cell chief resigns

Defiance by some leaders of the party's directive to campaign unitedly in the Davangere South byelection has led to a series of developments

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Defiance of the Congress party's directive to campaign unitedly in the Davangere South byelection has triggered infighting among minority leaders, with three-time MLC Abdul Jabbar resigning as KPCC Minority Cell chief on Saturday.

Mr. Jabbar served as the KPCC Minority Cell chief for five years, and some leaders have been questioning his style of functioning. He blamed some of the party legislators, who on Friday claimed that some minority leaders conspired to defeat the Congress nominee Samarth in the byelection.

Sources in the party said leaders considered close to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah – including Housing and Minorities Welfare Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan, the Chief Minister's political secretary Nazir Ahmed, and Mr. Jabbar – did not campaign adequately, in apparent violation of the party's call for unity.

Abdul Jabbar

Mr. Jabbar has stepped down, apparently following directions from the party high command. Pressure is now mounting on Mr. Nazir Ahmed to resign from the post of political secretary to the Chief Minister, sources claimed. Meanwhile, a camp led by Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar is said to be urging the high command to take action against Mr. Zameer Ahmed Khan, who could face removal in the event of a Cabinet reshuffle, sources indicated.

The unrest is linked to discontent over the denial of a party ticket to a Muslim candidate in the Davangere South bypoll

The unrest is linked to discontent over the denial of a party ticket to a Muslim candidate in the Davangere South bypoll. Legislators, including Saleem Ahmed and Rizwan Arshad, have reportedly blamed Mr. Zameer Ahmed Khan for a possible split in minority votes. Mr. Jabbar had indicated that SDPI candidate Afsar Kodlipete could secure a higher vote share in the election, where the Congress fielded Samarth, son of Horticulture Minister S.S. Mallikarjun and MP Prabha Mallikarjun.

Report submitted

According to sources, AICC secretary in-charge of Karnataka Abhishek Dutt has submitted a detailed report to the high command, recommending action against those accused of attempting to undermine the official candidate.

Party workers have also reportedly complained to AICC general secretary and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala, alleging that Mr. Zameer Ahmed Khan largely abstained from the campaign while focusing on electioneering in Kerala.

Sources added that some leaders did not make sufficient efforts to persuade rebel candidate Sadiq Pailwan to withdraw. In contrast, Mr. Saleem Ahmed and Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad played a key role in negotiations that led to his withdrawal. They also alleged that a section of leaders ran a social media campaign against the party candidate.

Other leaders

Meanwhile, other minority leaders such as N.A. Haris, Tanveer Sait, Rahim Khan, and Yasir Pathan Khan actively campaigned for the party, sources said.

There is also growing unease within a section of the party over Mr. Zameer Ahmed Khan's alleged "dominance" in minority-related matters. In the event of a Cabinet reshuffle, sources said he could be dropped, while Mr. Saleem Ahmed and Mr. Rizwan Arshad are being considered for induction.

Congress MLAs to visit Delhi today to press for Cabinet reshuffle, berths

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Following the byelections in the State, demands from ruling Congress MLAs for a Cabinet reshuffle to secure ministerial berths has gained momentum. Nearly 20 legislators are likely to travel to New Delhi on Sunday to urge the party high command to allow Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to undertake a Cabinet rejig.

A senior MLA, who is part of the delegation, told *The Hindu* that they plan to stay in Delhi for two to three days and seek meetings with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and AICC general secretaries K.C. Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala. They will also seek to meet Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, if he is in New Delhi, the legislator said.

A file photo of Karnataka Congress MLA at a dinner meet in Bengaluru.

"Our sole agenda is to urge the high command to permit a Cabinet reshuffle so that senior MLAs can be accommodated," the legislator said.

After half-term

The demand for a Cabinet rejig has been gaining traction since the government crossed its mid-term mark in November last year. According to the MLA, the party leadership had earlier indicated that the issue would be considered after this milestone. Legislators have been urging the leadership to drop some long-serving ministers – who have held portfolios in successive Congress governments – to make way for others and infuse "fresh energy" into the administration.

The plan to approach the high command was initially discussed after the State Budget, but was delayed due to the byelections, sources said. On March 12, around 30 MLAs met over dinner at a private club in Bengaluru to chalk out a strategy for pressing the demand.

The legislators are seeking the inclusion of experienced MLAs – those elected three to four times – with a proposal that at least 22 such members be accommodated in the reshuffle.

However, the party high command is expected to take a decision on the matter only after the Assembly elections in five States, when it may also review the leadership situation in Karnataka.

'Don't deduct Gruha Lakshmi funds for loan dues'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has ordered action on complaints alleging that private finance companies and microfinance institutions (MFIs) are allegedly deducting money from the accounts of women beneficiaries under the State government's Gruha Lakshmi scheme, citing pending loan dues. Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh has directed the officials concerned to take necessary steps in this regard.

The directive follows a complaint by Dinesh Gooli Gowda, MLC and Karnataka Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority vice-chairperson, who alleged that private finance firms and MFIs were withdrawing money from beneficiaries' accounts without their knowledge. Acting on this, the Chief Minister instructed the Chief Secretary to issue directions to all zilla panchayat CEOs.

Subsequently, Ms. Rajneesh has written to the Additional Chief Secretaries of the Home and Urban Development departments, as well as all Deputy Commissioners and zilla panchayat CEOs, asking them to take urgent action. Under the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, a monthly assistance of ₹2,000 is deposited into the bank accounts of women beneficiaries.

Siddaramaiah's pro-social justice posturing 'not genuine', says Deve Gowda

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) supremo H.D. Deve Gowda has slammed Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, alleging that the latter invokes the rhetoric of social justice only for political expediency.

Addressing the Greater Bengaluru convention of the party here on Saturday, the 93-year-old leader claimed that the Chief Minister but does not genuinely uphold the principles of social justice, and urged Mr. Siddaramaiah to introspect on his commitment to the cause.

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and Nikhil Kumaraswamy at the Greater Bengaluru Janata Dal (Secular) Convention, in Bengaluru on Saturday.

'With my consent'

Mr. Gowda alleged that "certain AHINDA leaders" had played a role in the fall of his son and former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy's coalition government with the Congress, and had also attempted to weaken the JD(S).

It was under these circumstances that the decision to align with the BJP was taken, with his approval, said Mr. Gowda.

He remarked that the conduct of the Congress towards JD(S) had eroded trust, "compelling" the party to join the NDA alliance.

Mr. Gowda described the incumbent State government as the worst he had witnessed in his six decades of political life.

Ready to travel

Reinterating his commitment to strengthen the party, the veteran leader said that he was ready to travel across the State to mobilise leaders and workers.

Nikhil Kumaraswamy, Youth JD(S) leader, claimed that the Congress government had done nothing for Bengaluru. All it had done was change its name to "Greater Bengaluru Authority."

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY
SHANTHA KRISHNAMURTHY

Mrs. Shantha Krishnamurthy, our mother,
passed away peacefully on March 7, 2026 in New York City
at the age of 94, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born in January 1932 and spent much of her life
in Chennai, moving to live with us, her children, in New York
after the passing of our father, Mr. A. N. Krishnamurthy in 1983.

She is survived by us and our spouses,
as well as five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Our mother was a brilliant woman with enormous drive and deep religious insight, and had a powerful and lasting impact on anyone who knew her. Much of our personal and professional success in life can be traced directly back to her.

We will forever miss her

Chandrika Tandon, Indra Nooyi, Krishnamurthy Narayanan

DEATH

C RAVI (63), Retired Supervisor, Canteen Dept, The Hindu, Chennai passed away on 10-04-2026. Address: B-76/1, Sabari Flats, 6th Cross Street, Hindu Colony, Nanganallur, Chennai - 600061. Contact: 98407 44641

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

5th YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God: and they that hear shall live. John 5:25

In Loving Memory of

Ln.Dr.S. Leenus
14.12.1955 - 12.04.2021
Husband of Regis Mary
Grand dad of Rachael Joanna

From Page One

HC orders CBI probe into 'monumental fraud' in acquiring land

According to corporate records examined by the Bench, LTC was incorporated only on January 4, 2011 –more than a decade after the application was filed and seven years after the final acquisition notification was issued.

Collusion

"The acceptance of such an application which was totally incomplete and bereft of details was not only entertained, but the State High Level Committee (SHLC), in its second meeting held on June 28, 2000, considered the proposal," the Bench observed.

> This was a fraud on the statute to deprive the landowners of their valuable property for pittance on behest of a non-existent entity

It further noted that "high speed and alacrity" with which the government moved to exercise its eminent domain power to acquire land for a "non-existent" entity shows collusion of government authorities and officials with the private entity and its promoters. The Bench further found that though the project report named leading businessmen, including Ramdas Pai and Dubai-based Syed Mohammed Salahuddin, as its promoters, they were nowhere associated with the entity that eventually got incorporated in 2011.

Even though investment of ₹250 crore and creation of 2,000 jobs was promised in the project proposal, the Bench, from the financial statements of LTC, noted that for the year 2022-23 the firm had a net worth of minus ₹8.6 lakh and zero operational income, and its Director's report stated that the firm is "in the process of identifying viable business opportunities and start its principal business operations".

"This was a fraud on statute to deprive the landowners of their valuable property for pittance on behest of a non-existent entity," the Bench said, noticing that the government had fixed compensation at ₹15 lakh per acre.

Strangely, the Bench, from the records found that the SHLC on March 7, 2023 permitted the LTC to develop an "integrated township" with development of commercial office spaces, IT park, R&D centre, malls, residential multi-storeyed apartment complex, hospitals, educational institutions, hotels, other service apartments, residential apartments, etc.

Cong. puts up united front over CM choice

Party hopes that it will win the Assembly election and come to power, but random statements by certain leaders are muddying the waters

G. Anand
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Congress leaders Sunny Joseph, V.D. Satheesan, Ramesh Chennithala and K.C. Venugopal at a party event. A. JAYAMOHAN

The Congress in Kerala on Saturday sought to dispel the impression that it was divided over the United Democratic Front (UDF)'s prospective Chief Minister candidate, even as it expressed confidence about returning to power in the 2026 Assembly election.

Ernakulam District Congress Committee (DCC) president Mohammed Shiyas's comment that he wanted the UDF's next Chief Minister to be from his home district raised concerns within the party, which is attempting to avoid factional debates over the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leadership.

Party workers also noted that Mr. Shiyas appeared to publicly back Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan, Paravur MLA. Mr. Shiyas's comment seemed ominous as it came weeks after Congress veteran P.J. Kurien and former KPCC president K. Sudhakaran publicly expressed their preference for senior leader Ramesh Chennithala as the UDF's Chief Minister "probable".

Thangal's remark

Meanwhile, Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leader Syed Munavvar Ali Shihab Thangal's statement that his party would not press its legitimate claim for the post of Deputy Chief Minister appeared to muddy the waters further, prompting IUML leader P.K. Kunhalikutty to put the speculation to rest by stating that such a proposition was not on the cards.

The Congress's internal differences prompted the Communist Party of India (Marxist)'s social media handles to portray the former as wracked by power struggles, one-upmanship, and factional feuding, even before the poll results were out.

'A collective effort'

Veteran Congress leader K.C. Joseph took strong exception to party leaders publicly opining about the UDF's Chief Minister choice. In a Facebook post, Mr. Joseph said the UDF's "impending victory" was a collective effort and not the endeavour of any one leader. "Congress has a time-tested procedure for settling questions of leadership. The AICC will take the final call," he wrote.

Former KPCC president K. Muraleedharan said a high voting percentage and "unprecedented turnout of women voters" guaranteed a UDF win. "Disputes about leadership would only serve to dishearten voters who have thrown in their lot with the Congress," he said. Mr. Chennithala dismissed the debate as superfluous, pointing out that the AICC has the final say in the matter. Congress leader Hibi Eden blamed the media for misconstruing Mr. Shiyas's off-the-cuff remark and quoting him out of context.

BJP outreach to Christians in Kerala suffers a blow

Hiran Unnikrishnan
KOTTAYAM

As the row triggered by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders P.C. George and Shone George in Kerala over their attack on a Syro-Malabar Catholic bishop and the Church-run *Deepika* newspaper intensifies, unease is spreading within the party over the potential political fallout.

The controversy comes when the BJP is aggressively courting the Christian community, especially in central Travancore. Party insiders now worry that targeting a powerful figure like the Bishop of Kanjirappally could disrupt carefully built bridges, particularly among a section of Catholics who align closely with their spiritual leadership.

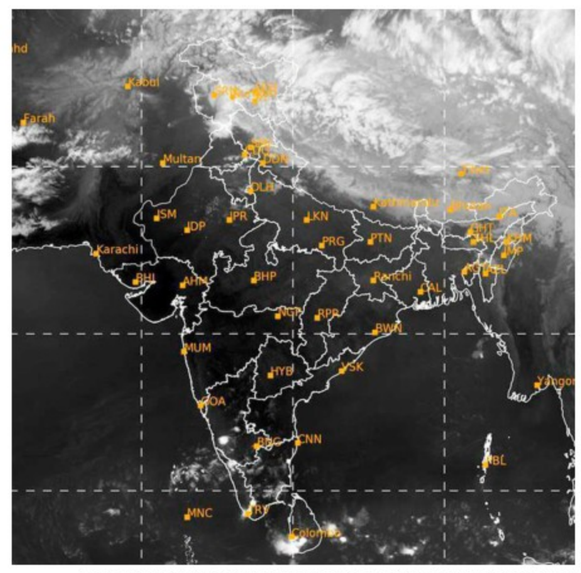
BJP, Church and FCRA

"There is a clear risk here. A large section of Catholics still take cues from their clergy. Provoking them with such remarks could undermine the party's engagement efforts, which is a long-term process and not just for the elections," a senior BJP leader said. "*Deepika* too is not just another publication. Despite its investors, it is still widely seen as the Church's voice."

The leadership is also wary of possible spillover effect on its engagement with the Church over the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, a key point of contention between the clergy and the national party.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Sikkim, West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Hot and humid weather likely at isolated places over Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	33.5	19.7	Kozhikode	—	36.4	27.4
Ahmedabad	—	40.2	21.9	Kurnool	—	41.6	29.6
Aizawl	0.6	31.8	14.9	Lucknow	—	35.3	18.4
Allahabad	—	37.6	19.6	Madurai	—	39.5	26.6
Bengaluru	1	34.8	24.4	Mangaluru	—	33.8	26.9
Bhopal	—	36.8	19.0	Mumbai	—	34.6	22.2
Bhubaneswar	—	37.7	26.4	Mysuru	—	36.0	20.0
Chandigarh	—	32.0	15.8	New Delhi	—	34.7	18.6
Chennai	—	37.1	27.0	Patna	—	35.9	21.2
Coimbatore	—	37.4	26.5	Port Blair	—	32.9	25.8
Dehradun	—	30.6	13.9	Puducherry	—	35.3	25.7
Gangtok	17	14.6	10.5	Pune	—	39.2	24.2
Goa	—	33.9	25.0	Raipur	—	38.2	23.3
Guwahati	3	29.8	20.1	Ranchi	—	32.0	18.0
Hubballi	—	39.0	23.0	Shillong	—	22.0	13.0
Hyderabad	—	38.3	26.9	Shimla	—	22.0	11.4
Imphal	6	26.4	19.9	Srinagar	—	19.0	9.1
Jaipur	—	36.5	20.2	Thiruvananthapuram	32	34.1	26.0
Kochi	10	32.8	26.6	Tiruchi	—	37.9	28.0
Kohima	11	15.2	11.6	Vijayawada	—	38.5	27.2
Kolkata	—	35.3	22.3	Visakhapatnam	—	34.0	28.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.72	..10	17	... 134	...212	
Bengaluru	...4	..62	52	 70	...102	
Chennai	...6	..13	23	 62	49	
Delhi	.32	..78	36	... 121	...146	
Hyderabad	.17	..10	43	... 165	...154	
Kolkata	...9	127	33	... 133	...115	
Lucknow	.12	..45	24	... 114	93	
Mumbai	...2	..45	32	... 105	...166	
Pune	.33	..68	43	 83	...133	
Visakhapatnam	.15	..41	14	 30	82	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Angul, Odisha recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 321 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Chamarajanagar, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 28

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

'Hyderabad attracting facilities of major global companies'

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Hyderabad is attracting facilities of major companies on the back of its highly skilled talent pool, world-class infrastructure and smooth road connectivity with minimal traffic congestion as well as affordable rentals, IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu said on Saturday.

Leading global financial institutions are choosing the city as their preferred destination for establishing global capability centres (GCCs), he said when a leadership team of New York-based global provider of technology services for financial markets PICO met him here. The company expressed interest in establishing a GCC in Hyderabad through its subsidiary PICO Technology India.

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy also participated in the meeting. Severe traffic congestion and air pollution in metro cities such as Bengaluru and Mumbai are making several IT companies and GCCs to relocate to Hyderabad, Mr. Sridhar Babu said.

Hyderabad's office space occupancy stands at 73%, significantly higher compared to 52% in Mumbai, he said,

Mr. Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said the government is making substantial investments to strengthen transport infrastructure across the State. Rail connectivity is also being planned alongside the ring roads to create a transportation network that can rival those of the world's leading cities.

NIA to take over probe into inter-State 'terror links' case

Rajulapudi Srinivas
VIJAYAWADA

Days after the police in Andhra Pradesh arrested 12 persons for suspected terror links, it is learnt that the case is being handed over to a Central agency for further investigation.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is likely to take over the case being probed by the West Zone police of the NTR Police Commissionerate, Vijayawada, according to the police.

12 arrested

The case was registered by the Two-Town police following the arrest of 12 persons, including a woman from Hyderabad, on March 23. The police said the arrest was carried out over alleged ties to banned terrorist organisations.

During investigation, it was revealed that the accused had discussed spreading 'Jihad' and incite violence in the country, taking up anti-Hindu activities in the country, besides planning to incite violence.

"We arrested the accused from Vijayawada, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Delhi, Bihar, Karnataka and Maharashtra. They were maintaining contacts with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (IS) and Al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) terrorist groups," an investigation officer said.

"The accused used social media groups to discuss about 'Jihadi activities' and on establishing a Caliphate," said West Zone Assistant Commissioner of Police N.S.V.K. Durga Rao.

"The police alerted the NIA, Telangana Counter Intelligence (CI), SIB, State and Central Intelligence and other wings," a CI Cell officer said.

"We will soon hand over the case to the NIA, as the accused operated from different locations and the case has links to multiple States," an investigation officer told *The Hindu*.

Youth Congress leader stabbed to death in Dharwad, six questioned

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

A Youth Congress leader was stabbed to death at his house in Dharwad on Friday night. The Hubballi-Dharwad Police have questioned six suspects so far in connection with the murder.

The deceased has been identified as Fairoz Khan Pathan, 34, general secretary of the Congress Youth Wing and a resident of Hashmi Nagar in Dharwad. Four persons allegedly stabbed him multiple times, said the police.

The police found Fairoz in a pool of blood and he was immediately rushed to the district hospital, where the doctors declared him brought dead.

Fairoz Khan Pathan

Speaking to pressperssons on Saturday, Police Commissioner N. Shashikumar said that based on the CCTV camera footage six suspects had been questioned in connection with the murder. Prima facie, it appeared to be an act of vengeance over personal rivalry, but all angles were being looked into, he said, adding that none has been arrested yet.

The prime accused is absconding and the Commissioner has formed a special team to nab all those involved.

Reacting on the development, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi has termed the murder an indication of the deteriorating law and order situation in the State under the Congress rule.

Threat ignored

Meanwhile, the victim's family members have alleged that although the police were informed about the death threat to Fairoz, they neglected it resulting in his murder.

On Friday night, several people gathered before the Dharwad Suburban Police Station demanding that the guilty be brought to book at the earliest. Following assurance by senior officials, they withdrew the protest.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Infrastructure Development, Ports and Inland Water Transport Department)
Karnataka Maritime Board
Office of the Executive Engineer, Port & Fisheries Division
Shamili Hall, 2nd Floor, Ambalapady, Udupi - 576103
Tel. No.: 0820-2532961 E-mail: pfdudupi@gmail.com

No. EE: P&F :DVN:Udupi:AE:Tender Notification-02/2026-27 Dt: 09.04.2026

Invitation for Tenders (IFT)

Short Term Tender Notification (3rd Call)

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, "**Supply Installation and Surveillance system with 3 months recording at Malpe Fishing Harbour in Udupi Taluk and District (Tender Amount Rs. 61.98 Lakhs)**" 3rd call Tender is invited in E-Procurement to execute the work. To participate in E-Procurement and for more information may be obtained in (**http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**) website. Last date for Tender Submission is 16-04-2026 at 5.00 p.m. For further extension refer above mentioned website. No separate paper notification will be issued.

Sd/-, Executive Engineer
Port and Fisheries Division, Udupi

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder

Call our toll-free number
1800 102 1878
Or write to us at
customercare@thehindu.co.in

Scan the QR code to register your feedback

THE HINDU thehindubusinessline.
FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR Young World THE HINDU

Government Of Karnataka ZillaPanchayat Chitradurga
Office of the District Ayush Officer
Bhuvaneshwari Circle, Municipal Colony, 4th Main Road, 2nd Cross Road, Chitradurga 577501
Phone: 08194-234113 e-mail id
daochitradugra2021@gmail.com

REF NO: DAOC/30/EST(2)/2025-26 DATE: 10.04.2026

PUBLICATION RE-E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through E-procurement portal only)

The following re-e-tender are invited under the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999-2000 in two-envelope format for the recruitment of 01 Data Entry Operator, 26 Group-D and 02 Masseurs and 04 Multipurpose Workers and 01 Group-D under the State Sector for a period of one year on outsourced basis against the sanctioned vacant posts in the Government Ayurveda Hospitals and Dispensaries of the District Circle under the Office of the District AYUSH Officer, Chitradurga.

Re-E-tender Details:- (1) Tender Estimated Amount Rs. 80. lakhs **(2)** E.M.D. Amount (Through e-procurement Portal only Tender amount As per 2%) Rs. 1,60,000/- **(3)** Commencement date for downloading tender documents on e-portal 10-04-2026 **(4)** Pre-Bid Meeting 15-04-2026Morning 11:30 AM **(5)** Last date for uploading tender documents through e-portal 24-04-2026 at Evening 5.00 PM **(6)** Date and place of opening of technical bid 27-04-2026 Morning 11.00 AM District AYUSH Officers, Office of District AYUSH Office, Chitradurga, **(7)** Date and Place of opening of financial bid Date will be fixed after verification of technical bid documents.Office of District AYUSH Officers, Chitradurga **(8)** Tender Notification Publish No AYD/2026-27/SEO212. Upload the necessary documents in e-Procurement portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in within the last date.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/27/2026-27

Sd/-District AYUSH Officer Chitradurga

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE
Gundlupet - 571111, Chamarajanagar District
Phone : 08229-222215, Email : apmcgundlupet1997@gmail.com

Sl.No.: a.p.m.c.(gund):05: 2026-27 Date : 06-04-2026

The Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee, Gundlupet, in accordance with the Karnataka Public Procurement Transparency Act 1999 and Rules 2000 and the Government orders and circulars issued in this regard, invites item-wise tenders in two envelopes for the following work from contractors registered with the Public Works Department and the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal and eligible as per Standard Tender Documents KW-4 Clause 03 (with latest amendments) under Karnataka Public Procurement.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approximate value of work (Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (Rs.)	Transaction fee, only in case Tenderers who wish to participate (Rs.)	Period of completion
01	Construction of C.C. Road, C.C. Drain and Deckslab at Main Market Yard and Teraknambi Sub Market Yard of A.P.M.C. Gundlupete Approved Under 2025-26 Annual Action Plan.	4,14,22,518-65 Exclusive of GST	6,22,000-00	As per Kppp Portal	6 months Excluding monsoon)

TENDER PROCESS TIME TABLE

1. Pre Bid Meeting : Date 15-04-2026 12.00 A.M.
2. Last Date for Submission of Technical and Financial Bid : Date 21-04-2026 05.00 P.M.
3. Opening of Technical Bid : Date 23-04-2026 05.00 P.M.
4. Opening of Financial Bid : Date 27-04-2026 03.00 P.M.

Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-Procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/protal/portal-home** under login for Contractors.

5. Place of Opening of Tender : Office of the Secretary Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Gundlupet
6. Address for Communication : Office of the Secretary Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Gundlupet

Sd/- Secretary
Agricultural Produce Market Committee
Gundlupet

Sd/- President
Agricultural Produce Market Committee
Gundlupet

No. : DIPR:CHANAGAR:32:2026-27

From Page One

U.S., Iran hold direct negotiations in Pakistan

On Saturday, Mr. Trump said in a social media post that the U.S. had begun "clearing out" the strait, but it was unclear whether he was referring to the reported use of mines there or Iran's broader ability to control the area.

Since the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the most direct contact Washington had with Tehran was in September 2013 when then-President Barack Obama called newly elected President Hassan Rouhani to discuss Iran's nuclear programme. The recent highest-level meetings were between Secretary of State John Kerry and counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif during negotiations over the programme.

The war has killed at least 3,000 people in Iran, 1,953 in Lebanon, 23 in Israel and more than a dozen in Gulf Arab states, and caused lasting damage to infrastructure in half a dozen regional countries. Iran's chokehold on the vital Strait of Hormuz has largely cut off the Persian Gulf and its oil and gas exports from the global economy, sending energy prices soaring.

Officials from the region present

Reflecting the high stakes, officials from the region said Chinese, Egyptian, Saudi and Qatari officials were in Islamabad to indirectly facilitate the talks.

Meanwhile, Israel pressed ahead with strikes in Lebanon after saying there is no ceasefire there. Iran and Pakistan have disagreed. The Lebanese state-run news agency reported at least three people killed.

Iran has floated the idea of charging ships, though the idea has been widely rejected by countries including the U.S. and Iran's neighbour Oman.

Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi had said Tehran was entering negotiations with "deep distrust" after strikes on Iran during previous rounds of talks. Mr. Araghchi said on Saturday that his country was prepared to retaliate if attacked again.

(With inputs from Reuters and AFP)

In Bengal, Modi backs Uniform Civil Code; Mamata opposes it

Prime Minister says by bringing UCC in the State, appeasement politics will come to an end, calls this election a 'battle to preserve Bengal's identity; Chief Minister accuses BJP of trying to divide the State by conducting delimitation and NRC

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Close battle: Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a public rally in Purba Bardhaman on Saturday, and, right, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee during a rally in the Barjora Assembly constituency in Bankura. PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday targeted each other over the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code in the poll-bound State.

"The commitment of the BJP is to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). By bringing UCC in the State, we will end the politics of appeasement forever," Mr. Modi said, addressing a gathering in the Muslim-dominated Jangipur area of Murshidabad district.

In its election manifesto released on Friday, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had promised to implement the UCC in the State within six months of being voted to power.

According to the last Census, Muslims make up about 27% of the West Bengal population.

'Bengali identity'

The Prime Minister addressed three public meetings at Jangipur, Kushmundi, and Kalna on Saturday, repeatedly reiterating his claims about demographic change taking place in the State, and calling the elections a "battle to preserve West Bengal's identity".

"West Bengal will no longer tolerate this game of appeasement and vote-bank politics. We will not allow Bengalis to become a minority in the State," Mr. Modi said.

Addressing the rally at Kushmundi, the Prime Minister also reiterated that refugees belonging to the Matua and Namasudra communities – Hindus from Bangladesh – would be granted citizenship under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

"Those who have suffered for decades and taken refuge here will get justice. The Matua and Namasudra communities will get citizenship under the CAA," he said. In his speeches, the Prime Minister raised the pitch about fear prevailing during the Trinamool Congress regime. "*Bhoy* out, *Bharsa* In, BJP ke vote *din* (Fear out, trust in, vote for BJP)," Mr. Modi said.

Ms. Banerjee, who also addressed multiple rallies during the day, strongly denounced the UCC. "They have spoken about UCC in the manifesto... I will vehemently oppose this. They are in majority today so they will pass the Bill. When they won't be in majority tomorrow, we will revoke the Bill... Free and fair elections are not possible as long as they remain," she said.

The Chief Minister also claimed that the BJP wanted to divide the State. "Elections are going on and in the middle of that, they are bringing the delimitation Bill in Parliament. This was not even debated. The reason behind this is that they want to divide Bengal and conduct the [National Register of Citizens] NRC here," she said.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson accused the BJP of trying to get her candidature from Bhabanipur seat in south Kolkata cancelled by attempting to file two false cases against her. However, the bid was foiled by Trinamool workers and the public, she said.

Hectic campaigning

With less than two weeks left for the first phase of polling in the State on April 23, Saturday turned out to be a day of hectic political campaigning.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also addressed rallies at Onda and Chhatna in Bankura district.

Mr. Shah said that the BJP would end the Trinamool's "syndicate raj" if voted to power, and would ensure justice for women facing atrocities.

"Mamata Banerjee plays the victim card. At times, she wears a bandage on her leg or head. This time, even if you wear a bandage the people of Bengal will not vote for you," the Home Minister said, referring to Ms. Banerjee's campaign in a wheelchair while canvassing at Nandigram in 2021.

ED searches residence of ex-Trinamool Minister

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday conducted searches at the residence of former Trinamool Congress Minister Partha Chatterjee in connection with the West Bengal school teachers' recruitment scam.

Mr. Chatterjee was reportedly present at his residence in the Naktala area of Kolkata during the time of the search, sources said. He had been previously summoned to the ED's office for questioning, but he did not attend, citing health issues.

Mr. Chatterjee was released on bail on November 11, 2025, after spending over three years in custody following his arrest by the ED in 2022 in connection with the scam. His close aide Arpita Mukherjee had also been arrested at the time.

The former Trinamool general secretary was arrested after ₹20 crore in cash and a huge amount of gold was seized from Ms. Mukherjee's residence.

After being released from jail, Mr. Chatterjee had shown keen interest in returning to the Trinamool. Although he is the sitting MLA from Behala Pashchim, he was denied ticket. The party had suspended him following his arrest in the case.

Bangladesh Minister hints at taking Hasina extradition forward

Suhasini Haidar
PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS

Khalilur Rahman

Bangladesh "reiterated" its demand for extradition of its former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during talks in Delhi, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman has said, while also looking forward to a visit by the new Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman, to India.

"We have already asked for [Sheikh Hasina's] return under our extradition treaty. We reiterated that," Mr. Khalilur Rahman said in Port Louis, Mauritius on Friday, responding to a question. "I am not disclosing everything because I cannot."

The request had been made by the previous caretaker government under the India-Bangladesh extradition treaty, and the Minister's comments confirm that the new Bangladeshi Nationalist Party (BNP) government intends to take the process forward. Mr. Khalilur Rahman held talks with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during his visit to Delhi this week, before travelling to Mauritius to attend the ninth Indian Ocean Conference.

The External Affairs Ministry did not respond to a request for a comment on India's response to the request made during talks.

A Ministry statement issued after Mr. Khalilur Rahman's talks with Mr. Jaishankar said the two sides had agreed to "explore proposals for deepening the partnership through bilateral mechanisms", without giving specific outcomes, and "follow-on meetings" would take place at an early date.

Mr. Khalilur Rahman said he was "reasonably optimistic" about bilateral relations after his meetings in Delhi.

"The leaders of our two countries, my Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had not only exchanged letters, they also spoke, and both want to advance the relationship. It is a relationship of consequence to both countries, and we talked about how to carry it forward. I hope that we will do this in the next few weeks," he said in a short interview before leaving for Dhaka.

Asked if Mr. Tarique Rahman, who took office in February, would visit India soon, he said, "There will be a visit, but we have not yet finalised the dates. In the run-up to the visit, there will be many activities."

Mr. Khalilur Rahman's comments and outlook of future high-level exchanges are significant, given that his "stopover" visit to Delhi was the first such outreach between India and the new Bangladesh government after tensions with the interim Muhammad Yunus administration, and a lack of engagement with the BNP during Ms. Hasina's tenure. During talks in Delhi, Bangladesh raised the issue of restarting visas that have been restricted by India in the past year and held discussions on energy supplies given the shortages due to the war in West Asia.

"We haven't seen anything yet – it will get worse. There is no absolutely no way of confronting this crisis alone because the effects will reverberate through the years," Mr. Khalilur Rahman said, when asked by *The Hindu* about regional responses to the crisis.

JD(U) leaders conspired with BJP for Nitish's exit: Tejashwi

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

The Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Legislative Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, on Saturday said that due to fear of getting into the trap of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED), leaders of the Janata Dal (United) conspired against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to force him to step down.

Mr. Yadav also claimed that the decision regarding the Chief Minister's resignation had been made much earlier, during the Assembly election itself, but leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) did not reveal it.

"Since the beginning of the Assembly election, I was telling everyone that these people [BJP] will not allow him to continue in the post of the CM. These people did not dare to reveal it during the election. Whatever is happening today was decided secretly, much in advance," Mr. Yadav said.

The Rashtriya Janata Dal leader asserted that the development was against the wishes and desires of Mr. Kumar. "The big leaders in the JD(U) have compromised with the BJP due to fear of CBI and ED, and they are the ones who conspired against Nitish *ji*," Mr. Yadav said. He also raised apprehensions that in the days to come the BJP may swallow the JD(U).

Mr. Yadav said that whoever becomes the Chief Minister will not have the people's mandate as the mandate was given in the name of Mr. Kumar.

Mr. Yadav, however, criticised the ruling National Democratic Alliance government, alleging that leaders of the BJP and the JD(U) were fighting for the "*kursi*" (seat) while people of Bihar were suffering.

JD(U) leaders meet Nitish Kumar ahead of his likely resignation as Bihar CM

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Nitish Kumar

Janata Dal(U) chief Nitish Kumar is likely to step down as Bihar Chief Minister on April 13, paving the way for the formation of a new government in the State two days later, according to senior party leaders who met him at his residence on Saturday.

"Before his resignation, Mr. Kumar will first hold the last meeting of his Cabinet and address his party MLAs. Soon after that, the NDA legislators will meet in Patna, where the name of the next Chief Minister is likely to be announced," said a senior JD(U) leader who did not wish to be named.

The new leader will then meet the Governor to stake claim to form the next government, and may then take oath on April 15 at the Raj Bhavan, he added.

Ramprit Mandal, JD(U) MP from Jhanjharpur, said it had largely become clear that the next Chief Minister would be from the BJP, while there would be two Deputy Chief Ministers from the JD(U), including Nishant Kumar, the outgoing Chief Minister's son.

'Cabinet to be same'

Mr. Nishant Kumar was earlier said to be reluctant to take up the post, but was convinced by some JD(U) leaders. Another JD(U) leader said the rest of the Cabinet would remain the same.

The question of who will be the next Chief Minister is up in the air, though the current Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary is being considered the front-runner. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai is being seen as another possible candidate.

In another development, Lakhendra Kumar Raushan, alias Lakhendra Paswan, Bihar's Minister for SC/ST welfare and two-time BJP MLA, met Mr. Nitish Kumar on Saturday, fuelling speculation that he may be a contender.

"Very soon. everything on the next CM of Bihar will be known to all," Mr. Paswan told presspersons after the meeting.

Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan, who is also a member of the ruling alliance, has ruled himself out of the race, saying, "All will be done very soon.".

Another name doing the rounds is that of Bihar Sports Minister Shryeshi Singh, a two-time BJP MLA from Jamui and daughter of former Bihar Railway Minister Digvijay Singh, a friend-turned-foe of the Chief Minister.

India, U.S. to boost nuclear cooperation, explore LPG exports

Press Trust of India
WASHINGTON

Vikram Misri

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri discussed furthering energy cooperation with the U.S. in nuclear power and new areas such as coal gasification and LPG exports in his meeting with U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright.

Mr. Misri's discussion with Mr. Wright focused on "advancing energy security, deepening bilateral energy trade, and identifying new avenues to strengthen the India-U.S. Energy Partnership", the Indian Embassy said in a social media post on Friday.

U.S. Ambassador to India, Sergei Gor, who was also present at the meeting, said America was ready to cooperate with India on civil nuclear cooperation in addition to other areas, such as coal gasification and U.S. LPG exports.

"Great to spend this (Friday) morning with @SecretaryWright and FS Vikram Misri to discuss the future of U.S.-India energy cooperation. After India's historic passage of the SHANTI bill, we are ready to cooperate on civil nuclear in addition to other areas such as coal gasification and U.S. LPG exports," Mr. Gor said in a social media post.

Later on Friday night, he hosted Mr. Misri at U.S. President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida.

Mr. Misri arrived in the U.S. late Tuesday night on a three-day visit. He held meetings with senior officials from the departments of defence, commerce and state. He also met Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Thursday.

13 killed, 30 injured in accident in Bihar

Press Trust of India
KATIHAR

At least 13 people were killed and 30 injured following a collision involving a bus, a truck, and a pick-up van in Bihar's Katihar district on Saturday evening, a police officer said.

The accident took place at 6.30 pm on NH-31 in Kodha block of Katihar, Superintendent of Police Shikhar Choudhary told presspersons.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced an *ex gratia* of ₹2 lakh to families of the deceased, and ₹50,000 to each injured.

While initial reports said seven people died in the accident, six of the injured died during treatment.

A police official said those travelling in the pick-up van were coming from the neighbouring Purnea district.

It is suspected that the bus driver, who is among the injured people, lost control of the vehicle leading to the crash. An investigation is under way.

Drug smugglers to face stringent measures: J&K L-G Manoj Sinha

Peerzada Ashiq
JAMMU

Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha on Saturday announced stringent measures, including revoking licences, passports, Aadhaar and other documents of those involved in drug smuggling in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Drug smugglers' assets will be seized, ringleaders prosecuted, and punishment will be delivered swiftly. The administration will confiscate all property, revoke licences, passports, Aadhaar, and freeze bank accounts of all those involved," Mr. Sinha said. "Those who destroy society will face the full and uncompromising weight of the law," he added.

He made the statement while launching a mass movement for "drug-free J&K" at the M.A. Stadium in Jammu.

The L-G said there was a new Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) against drug traffickers.

"Under this SOP, if they are absconding, a Look Out Circular will be issued immediately," said Mr. Sinha.

Cross-border smuggling

Without naming Pakistan, Mr. Sinha said, "Our neighbour is using cross-border smuggling to poison our communities and undermine our nation's future. Every officer carries one obligation: this must stop. The full force of the law is now directed at smugglers. Their networks will be dismantled without delay."

ASSEMBLY POLLS

'Rivals acting as agencies of BJP in West Bengal'

Trinamool national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday labelled political rivals as "agencies" of the BJP, and promised to restore voting rights of disenfranchised citizens within a month of returning to power.

Addressing a rally here, Mr. Banerjee identified three "agencies" allegedly working to undermine people and strengthen the BJP in West Bengal's Murshidabad district — Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and politician Humayun Kabir.

He accused Mr. Kumar of "taking away voting rights" of the poor under the guise of logical discrepancies on electoral rolls, and warned that a weakened Trinamool would hurt them more than the party. PTI

Abhishek Banerjee during an election campaign meeting in in Birbhum. PTI

Thursday's polls drew global attention: EC

The Election Commission (EC) on Saturday said that the Assembly polls in Kerala, Puducherry and Assam drew global attention as 38 delegates from 22 nations witnessed firsthand the electoral process in India.

The EC, in a statement, said that the delegates witnessed the scale, precision, and vibrancy of India's electoral process as part of the poll panel's International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP), 2026.

It said that the delegates described their experience as "a true festival of democracy" and expressed admiration for the record voter participation, meticulous planning and seamless execution of polls.

"...what is overwhelming for me is the enthusiasm of people to vote.." Branimir Farkas from Croatia said, as per the statement. PTI

> I believe the BJP will return with very good results [in Assam], even better than earlier. Out of 126 seats, we may secure 90 to 100 seats
>
> **HIMANTA BISWA SARMA**
> Chief Minister of Assam

'NDA to win in Bengal, Assam, Puducherry, T.N.'

RPI (Athawale) chief and Union Minister Ramdas Athawale on Saturday expressed confidence that the BJP and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) would come to power in West Bengal, Assam, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, while the NDA had a favourable atmosphere in Kerala as well. PTI

> Potato farmers in West Bengal are struggling to get the right price... Mamata govt. hurt livelihoods by restricting access to markets in nearby States
>
> **DHARMENDRA PRADHAN**
> Union Minister of Education

Solid supporter: G. Achuthamenon is a professional campaigner and speaker. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

Tamil Nadu's Achuthamenon, key campaigner for the CPI(M) in Kilvelur

B. Kolappan
CHENNAI

There may be innumerable Achutha Menons in Kerala, a State once governed by Chief Minister C. Achutha Menon, but here, in Tamil Nadu's Nagapattinam, an Achuthamenon is actively campaigning for a candidate in the Kilvelur Assembly constituency.

As the election campaign in Tamil Nadu gathers momentum, G. Achuthamenon, a member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and a person with physical disabilities, is travelling to every nook and corner of the constituency in a vehicle equipped with a public address system, canvassing votes for the party's candidate, D. Latha. "I begin campaigning at 9 a.m. from the party office in Kilvelur, where I am staying. As I am unable to walk, one of the comrades carries me to the vehicle. I reach each spot ahead of the candidate and address the people. Once she arrives, I move on to the next location," says the 38-year-old, who is a polio survivor. He is also the president of the Differently Abled Association in Kilvelur North Union.

Mr. Achuthamenon's father, P. Ganesan, was a supporter of the Left parties, while his mother, Valli, was a member of the Communist Party of India. "Our area has a strong base for the party. It was S.D. Thangaiyan, a late party leader, who named me after Achutha Menon [the former CM of Kerala]. However, I use it as a single word – Achuthamenon," he explains, adding that his political journey began with the CPI(M).

His association with the party, he says, made him an avid reader. "I love Dostoevsky [Russian author]. I have read Su. Venkatesan's *Velpari*," says Mr. Achuthamenon, who also wrote the script for the television serial *Muthazhagu*. He writes poetry and articles, and paints as well. He is also a member of the Tamil Nadu Progressive Writers and Artistes Association in Kilvelur.

On the political landscape

During the campaign, he highlights the threat posed by the BJP and its allies, the relevance of Periyar and Ambedkar, and the need for a Left alternative. "Actor Vijay [president of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam] has no political background and wants to become Chief Minister overnight. He has no ideology or programme. He does not know what he will do if he becomes Chief Minister. The youth who follow him because of his screen presence should be aware of this," he says.

Asked about the prospects of the party candidate, Ms. Latha, he expresses confidence that she will win, though the margin may be narrow due to the presence of Mr. Vijay's party and a split in youth votes.

A professional campaigner and speaker, Mr. Achuthamenon receives remuneration when he works for others. "But I will work without any expectation from the party. Our comrades provide me with meals and take care of my needs. I sleep in the office," he says. Mr. Achuthamenon's only close relative is his brother's daughter. "I owe everything to the party. But for the party, I would have remained just another person with disabilities. Who knows? I might have even been left on a platform to beg," he adds.

Trinamool's 'young dynasts' face a tough fight in and around Kolkata

The party has fielded a trio of young faces in the city and adjoining districts — Shrreya Pande from Maniktala, Sirsanya Banerjee from Uttarpara, and Tirthankar Ghosh from Panihati — all heirs of prominent Trinamool leaders, signalling a generational handover anchored in political legacy

IN FOCUS

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress's attempt to pass the torch to the next generation by fielding a trio of younger candidates in Kolkata and adjoining districts for the Assembly election comes with a twist – all three are children of prominent party leaders.

For the Maniktala seat in the heart of Kolkata, the party has fielded Shrreya Pande, 42, daughter of the late Sadhan Pande, a Minister in the Mamata Banerjee Cabinet till his death in 2022.

On winning the subsequent byelection, his wife, Supti Pandey, represented the seat, meaning that the voters of this constituency in north Kolkata have continuously elected the parents of Ms. Shrreya Pande for over two decades.

'I call him uncle'

She is pitted against veteran politician Tapas Roy, who was a senior Trinamool Congress leader and Minister till he defected to the BJP in 2024 and contested that year's Lok Sabha election from Kolkata North on BJP ticket. Ms. Shrreya Pande calls herself a "daughter" of the constituency, but is well aware of the political challenge she faces. "[Tapas Roy] has seen me grow up and I call him uncle," she said.

Mr. Roy, however, said that it was not a fight between two individuals, but between two competing ideologies of the Trinamool Congress and the BJP, pointing out that he quit the State's ruling party because of its corruption.

In the 2021 Assembly election, Sadhan Pande won the seat by a margin of 21,000 votes against the BJP's Kalyan Chaubey. In the byelection following his death, his widow won by a margin of 63,000 votes, aided by her daughter's campaigning.

"Considering the faith that the electors have in our family, I will make Maniktala a model constituency once elected to the Assembly," she said.

On the other bank of the river, Sirsanya Banerjee, 38, is the Trinamool candidate for Uttarpara in Hooghly district. Like his father, Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee, Mr. Sirsanya Banerjee dons an advocate's gown and practises at the Calcutta High Court.

Uttarpara has been a Trinamool stronghold, but this time, the junior Mr. Banerjee is facing one of the most popular leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Meenakshi Mukherjee. She has created a niche in politics through movements at the grassroots level and her campaign in Uttarpara is already generating significant enthusiasm.

The BJP has fielded Dipanjan Chakraborty, a former National Security Guard commando, making it a three-cornered contest.

For the Banerjees, this is a prestige battle. The Trinamool had won the Uttarpara seat by a 35,000-vote margin in 2021 and Mr. Kalyan Banerjee represents the Sreerampur Lok Sabha seat under which Uttarpara falls.

"It will be a different experience for me contesting Assembly polls. When I fight with my father in court, he is a senior advocate. During such cases, the father-son relationship becomes very professional. Here I see the relationship differently; people acknowledge me because of him," says Mr. Sirsanya Banerjee.

Emotional battle

For Tirthankar Ghosh, son of Nirmal Ghosh, the party's chief whip in the outgoing Assemtbly, the fight is both emotional and electoral.

He is contesting the Panihati Assembly seat in North 24 Parganas district, where the BJP has fielded the mother of the doctor who was sexually assaulted and murdered at Kolkata's R.G. Kar Hospital on August 9, 2024. She has made an emotional appeal to voters to defeat the Trinamool Congress, blaming the party for her daughter's fate. She has directly lashed out at Mr. Nirmal Ghosh, accusing him of colluding with officials to quickly cremate her daughter.

Mr. Tirthankar Ghosh, 39, carefully avoids any questions on the R.G. Kar incident while campaigning. "We will continue to work closely with the people. Panihati is a stronghold of the party and our flag will fly high in the Assembly seat," he said.

His father, a five-time MLA, had defeated the BJP's Sanmoy Bandyopadhyay in this seat by a margin of over 25,000 votes in 2021.

This time around, the CPI(M) has fielded popular youth leader Kalatan Dasgupta for the seat, making it a three-cornered fight.

Trinamool Congress chairperson and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been relying on old guards of the party, but this election will give the three so-called 'nepo babies' a chance to prove their political mettle.

Kolkata heirs: Sirsanya Banerjee, the Trinamool candidate for Uttarpara in Hooghly district; (right) Shrreya Pande campaigns for the Maniktala seat in the heart of Kolkata. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

'It could have been our daughter': rape victim's mother draws divergent responses in campaign

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Almost 20 months after the R.G. Kar rape and murder victim, widely known as Abhaya, passed away, her mother, Ratna Debnath, stepped into the political arena to get justice for her daughter.

She is fighting the Assembly election in West Bengal on Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ticket. Though her candidature has received massive support, especially from women, it has also invited criticism.

On Thursday, as she campaigned in the lanes of her Panihati neighbourhood with folded hands, Ms. Debnath, accompanied by her husband, appealed to voters to support her.

She blamed the Trinamool Congress government for the R.G. Kar incident.

"The courage she has shown is unparalleled. We are all standing here for a mother to bring justice for her daughter," senior BJP leader Smriti Irani, who too accompanied Ms. Debnath, said.

Sentimental scenes

As Ms. Debnath made her way into the crowd, mothers hugged her, cried and wiped tears with their saris. The crowd empathised with her, the sentiment of "it could have been our daughter" echoed through it.

"My first work will be to bring justice for my daughter and not let any other Abhaya happen in this State," she said.

During one of her door-to-door campaigns, some local people attacked her. Though the protesters did not carry any political banners, they shouted "Joy Bangla" – a popular slogan used by the Trinamool Congress.

"They are very scared of my candidature. They are not happy after killing my daughter. They may think killing me will help because there will be no one left to seek justice for my daughter," Ms. Debnath said in response.

Impassioned stance: Ratna Debnath blames the Trinamool Congress government for the rape and murder of her daughter. ANI

Ratna Debnath is fighting the Assembly election on BJP ticket from Panihati constituency

Civil society reacts

The R.G. Kar movement saw a massive outpouring of support from the civil society with people taking to the streets to seek justice for who they called their "daughter".

Though most stood by Ms. Debnath in her journey then, they are wary about her candidature now.

"The R.G. Kar movement was a non-partisan moral assertion against systemic injustice, not an electoral project. The candidature of the victim's mother from the BJP risks recasting a broad civil society movement into a partisan frame. This also raises serious concerns, given the BJP's record in cases like the Hathras gang rape case, Unnao rape case, Kathua rape case, and the situation in Manipur, along with its protection of figures like Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, Kuldeep Singh Sengar, Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, Asaram Bapu and those convicted in the Bilkis Bano case," Subarna Goswami, a senior doctor who was at the forefront of the movement, said.

Though Dr. Goswami said that no one should judge the grieving mother's choice to join politics, he insisted that the core values of the movement should not be lost to partisan politics and be made an election agenda.

Justice, accountability, and systematic reform were the biggest demands of the protests, he said.

One of the regular participants of the many demonstrations and protests of the movement, Smritiparna Sengupta, said people who claim that Ms. Debnath joining the BJP has made a mockery of the movement do so out of arrogance.

'Constitutional right'

"Even if Abhaya's mother had been a BJP member that day, the protest wouldn't become meaningless... We must remember that we did not do the movement as a favour to anyone. Whoever the crime happens to, it's natural that civilised people will demand justice for it," she said.

Ms. Sengupta said that though she personally does not endorse someone joining the BJP, no one has experienced Ms. Debnath's pain and should not judge her choice.

Another active participant in the protests, Sumedha Dey, said a mother seeking justice for her daughter using any means is not wrong, be it politics or movements.

However, she questioned if Ms. Debnath joined the party under any political pressure, a sentiment that has been echoed by many others.

"As a mother, she went through a lot. If she were not Abhaya's mother, no one would have judged her for joining the BJP. It is her constitutional right. We should not be judging her," Ms. Dey said.

She said that women's safety and gender issues become part of poll manifestos during every election, with each offering social welfare schemes for women, but added that none of the promises brings real change after the elections.

Repolling held in violence-hit polling booth in Assam

Press Trust of India
GUWAHATI

Polling was held on Saturday at a booth of the Karimganj (North) Assembly constituency in Sribhumi district of Assam, where re-election was ordered following clashes between supporters of the BJP and the Congress two days ago, officials said.

The repolling in booth number 239 at Babyland High English School commenced at 7 a.m. and continued till 5 p.m.

The re-election was ordered following clashes between supporters of the BJP and the Congress. "There were reports of some issues on April 9, the polling day for the Assam Assembly election, and hence, the repolling was ordered," an official said.

Triangular contest

The booth has a total of 599 voters. There are 14 candidates in the fray in this Barak Valley constituency, with a triangular contest among the BJP's Subrata Bhattacharjee, Congress's Jakaria Ahmed and Choudhury Hibbur Rasul Usama Mabrur of the AIUDF. The overall polling percentage in the constituency was recorded at 86.15% on Thursday.

INBRIEF

Indian-born cheetah gives birth to four cubs at Kuno

Four cubs have been born to an Indian-born cheetah in Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh, Union Minister Bhupender Yadav said on Saturday. The fresh litter takes India's total population of cheetahs to 57. Mr. Yadav said this is the first recorded cheetah birth in the open forest since India's reintroduction programme for the big cat species, Project Cheetah, was launched in 2022, as all previous births have taken place inside enclosures. The cubs have been born to a daughter of South African cheetah Gamini, aged 25 months.

Over 300 Indian fishermen stranded in Iran return home

A group of 312 Indian fishermen, who were stranded in Iran amid escalating regional tensions, returned to India through Armenia, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Saturday. The fresh batch was brought back home a week after 345 Indian fishermen were evacuated from Iran. The Minister thanked his Armenian counterpart, Ararat Mirzoyan, for Armenia's assistance in the return of Indian nationals on social media. PTI

Asha Bhosle admitted to hospital with chest infection

Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle was admitted to a private hospital in Mumbai on Saturday evening due to chest infection and exhaustion, her granddaughter Zanai Bhosle said. Sources had earlier said she suffered cardiac arrest and also had pulmonary problems. Ms. Zanai took to Instagram to share details about Ms. Bhosle's health. The 92-year-old singer, with a career spanning over eight decades, is known for her versatility and has sung many memorable melodies, from romantic songs to ghazals to peppy numbers. PTI

35-year-old man arrested for sexually assaulting a child

A daily wage labourer allegedly abducted and sexually assaulted a five-year-old girl and abandoned her in a sack in Chhattisgarh's Durg district on Friday. The victim is hospitalised where her condition is stable, a senior police officer said on Saturday. A case has been registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and the accused, identified as Dhaneswar Sahu, 35, was subsequently arrested, the police said.

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	4	5	3	8	6	7	9	2
7	9	2	1	5	4	3	6	8
6	8	3	7	9	2	1	4	5
3	1	8	9	4	5	6	2	7
5	2	4	6	3	7	9	8	1
9	6	7	8	2	1	4	5	3
2	7	9	4	1	8	5	3	6
8	3	6	5	7	9	2	1	4
4	5	1	2	6	3	8	7	9

'Torpedoing of Iran ship a first for Indian Ocean Region, must not happen again'

Mauritius Foreign Minister says India has been playing a critical role helping countries and islands in the Indian Ocean to develop their maritime domain awareness; hopes U.S.-Iran peace talks end in long-term agreement, because the war has hit small states in terms of energy and food security

INTERVIEW

Dhananjay Ramful

Suhasini Haidar
PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS

The torpedoing of an Iranian ship off Sri Lankan waters is a first in the Indian Ocean and must not be allowed to happen again, Mauritius Foreign Minister Dhananjay Ramful said. The impact of the war in West Asia on energy and food security has been at the top of the agenda at the Indian Ocean Conference in Mauritius.

Mr. Ramful, who met External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Friday, praised India for support with supplies amid shortages due to the Hormuz Strait block, and said he hopes U.S.-Iran talks in Pakistan will end with a long-term agreement. Edited excerpts:

What concrete outcomes has the Indian Ocean Conference provided on the way forward for the region after the war in West Asia?

Definitely, in the speeches of speakers, most of them have been talking about the Middle East (West Asia) crisis, and one thing that is on top of the agenda is about the freedom of navigation. We have the problem with the Strait of Hormuz, and we have to make sure that in this part of the Indian Ocean, the UNCLOS, the international law of the sea, is respected by all coastal states.

In terms of regional security, does the torpedoing of an Iranian ship by the U.S. in the Indian Ocean indicate that IOR (Indian Ocean Region) countries have failed to secure their own region? And do you think India's role as a net security provider has been challenged by this incident?

Well, I should say that we haven't had such an incident in the past. This is the first time for many years that we have had such an incident in the Indian Ocean, near Sri Lanka. We have to make sure that this doesn't happen again in the Indian Ocean. This part of the Indian Ocean so far is pretty safe. I think India has been playing a critical role helping countries and islands in the Indian Ocean to develop their maritime domain awareness, with the India fusion centre in Gurgaon. This is also helping us to upgrade our maritime domain awareness. We have also had the assistance of India whenever there have been any problems, like cyclones, any disasters that have happened. We had an oil spill a few years ago (from a Japanese ship in 2020) and India was the first responder. So I think, having India as our friend in the Indian Ocean helps us a lot.

What are your hopes from the U.S.-Iran talks in Pakistan, and have you been in touch with your Pakistani counterparts?

No, I haven't spoken to my counterpart, but I think it's a good sign that we at least have a two-week ceasefire. And we just hope that the parties will give their best endeavour to try to make sure that we have a long-term agreement on this. Because with a war in the Middle East, small island states like Mauritius have been affected in terms of energy security as well as food security. So we just hope this war ends as soon as possible. India has offered its support. We are in the process of signing an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) on energy supplies – petroleum supplies and fertilizer supplies as well.

Mauritius and Seychelles have agreed on joint sovereignty for one part of the ocean – how does that work?

Well, we share an area on our continental shelf, which is about 365 sq. km of sea, which we share with Seychelles, and we jointly manage that part of the Indian Ocean when it comes to fishing any resources. We recently signed an MoU on that part of the joint management area with regards to making sure that the marine environment is respected in that area.

Journalists speak out against increasing censorship online

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Representatives of working journalists gathered at the Press Club of India here on Saturday to speak out against increasing censorship online and the proposed changes to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

"I fear this will be not just censorship, but selective censorship," freelance journalist Jatin Gandhi said. The proposed amendment to the IT Rules will give the Information and Broadcasting Ministry more authority over individual journalists unaffiliated to any organisation.

That could hurt freelance journalists, said Ritika Jain, an independent reporter. The speakers highlighted a spate of takedown requests impacting satire and news platforms in recent weeks.

"Freelancers don't have institutional backing," Ms. Jain said. "They work alone; they are their own editors, their own proofreaders, their own researchers, their own photographers ... in between all that, if you give them the added compliance of following these rules of mandatory deepfake labelling, preserving content for over 180 days, and other requirements, it becomes a burden for a journalist."

Nikhil Pahwa, editor of the MediaNama news portal, said journalists would have to engage with social media firms, as they were the "third party in the middle" and that journalists were "being censored through them." He recommended that policy heads of YouTube, Instagram, X, and other platforms engage with journalists.

Independent journalist Paranjoy Guha Thakurta rued the lack of accountability in takedown actions. "Nobody is revealing who complained against us," he said, referring to takedown orders under Section 69A and 79 of the IT Act without hearing those who posted the piece.

Phule left a lasting legacy of social reform and inclusion, says President

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and other senior leaders joined a function here in Samvidhan Sabha to celebrate the 199th birth anniversary of social reformer Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. Several State governments too held programmes to remember Phule.

Ms. Murmu, after paying tributes to Phule, said the reformer devoted his life to the uplift of marginalised communities.

Born on April 11, 1827, in Katgun village of Satara district in Maharashtra, Phule is known for his contributions to society, particularly for educating women in marginalised classes. He died on November 28, 1890.

"Mahatma Jyotirao Phule devoted his life to the uplift of marginalised communities. He made significant contributions to the advancement of women's education, leaving a lasting legacy of social reform and inclusion," Ms. Murmu said.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and others at Parliament House lawns on Saturday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Mr. Modi and Mr. Gandhi engaged in a brief conversation, evoking keen interest in political circles and social media.

Both leaders are pitched in an intense political fight, especially during the ongoing Assembly elections. The duo spoke when Mr. Modi arrived to pay floral tributes at the statue of Phule on Parliament premises with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union Minister J.P. Nadda, and other dignitaries. Mr. Modi said Phule was a visionary social reformer who dedicated his life to the ideals of equality, justice and education.

"He was also a pioneer in championing the rights of women and the marginalised. Through his efforts, education became a powerful instrument of empowerment," he added. "This year, we mark the start of his 200th birth anniversary celebrations. May his thoughts continue to guide everyone in the pursuit of societal progress," Mr. Modi said.

Mr. Gandhi said Phule dedicated his entire life to protect the rights and entitlements of the marginalised. "His struggle against discrimination and inequality showed the nation the path to equality and justice. His ideals and thoughts will forever continue to inspire us to move forward towards social justice," he said.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said Phule established social justice and recalled his words that "no one should tolerate injustice, whether it is against oneself or against anyone else".

"Phule waged a powerful struggle against caste discrimination, social evils, and superstitions, and awakened society to the ideals of equality and women's empowerment," Mr. Kharge said.

Several State governments celebrated Phule's birth anniversary. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said Phule had advocated free and compulsory education in 1882 and laid the foundation for the present-day Right to Education Act.

States nudged to adopt farm solar to cut power subsidy bill

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Indian States collectively spend nearly ₹2.4 lakh crore a year on subsidising electricity for agricultural and domestic consumers, says Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Secretary, Ministry for New and Renewable Energy, with the Centre's solar programmes increasingly designed not just to add clean energy capacity but to persuade States that this subsidy bill can be eliminated over time.

"Different States have different amounts which they give. So to that extent they will save on this huge subsidy outgo once they adopt more and more farm solarisation and more and more rooftop solarisation," Mr. Sarangi told *The Hindu* in an interview.

India has an installed capacity of 535 GW as of March 2026, with about 150 GW coming in from solar – the single largest non-fossil energy source. With 54% of India's installed power capacity drawing from non-fossil energy sources, the Centre – while expanding coal use – has generally touted its solar and wind capacity as evidence of its green commitments at international fora.

Mr. Sarangi's remark frames two of India's flagship solarisation schemes – PM KUSUM for agricultural feeders and PM Surya Ghar for household rooftops – as fiscal instruments rather than merely climate or energy programmes.

Maharashtra model

Maharashtra has emerged as the Centre's primary exhibit. The State launched the *Mukhyamantri Saur Krishi Vahini Yojana* in 2017, installing decentralised solar plants of 2 MW-10 MW capacity within a 5 km radius of agriculture-dominated substations, replacing expensive grid power on agricultural feeders with cheaper solar generation. Under MSKVY 2.0, the State scaled its ambitions to 16 GW – far exceeding the Central Financial Assistance (CFA), (the Centre's share of funds) available under PM KUSUM. "The CFA under PM KUSUM is only for about 4.5 GW," Mr. Sarangi said, "but the rest they did because they realised that this kind of an intervention is helping them to wipe off the cross-subsidy charges towards agriculture subsidy."

Energy source: PM KUSUM and PM Surya Ghar are the two flagship solarisation schemes.

Maharashtra's ambition has, however, created a wrinkle in the Centre's domestic manufacturing push. A portion of the State's tender was structured under its own State-run scheme rather than under PM KUSUM, which allowed it to seek an exemption from the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) requirement for solar cells – effectively permitting the import of cheaper Chinese cells, even as modules must still comply with ALMM norms. Cells joined together make up solar modules (or panels) that produce electricity.

The ALMM – the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers – is the Centre's primary tool for building a domestic solar manufacturing base. Introduced in 2019, it requires all Union government-backed solar projects, including those under PM KUSUM and PM Surya Ghar, to use only MNRE-approved domestic equipment.

The challenge here is that such equipment is usually costlier than that in China and Vietnam and in short supply for vendors who are charged with installing solar equipment.

Mr. Sarangi explained this as saying that the Maharashtra exemption was available only because the State's tender was issued before a cut-off date of December 9, 2024. "Rest of the States haven't done so they will not get this exemption.

The same subsidy-elimination logic now underpins the Utility-Led Aggregation (ULA) model within PM Surya Ghar. The scheme's conventional demand-driven mode has already covered 35 lakh households, but it has a structural limitation: poor and lower-middle-class households that receive heavily subsidised or near-free electricity have no incentive to install rooftop solar. Under ULA, the utility installs rooftop solar on behalf of these households – either through its own capital expenditure or via a RESCO (renewable energy service company) contractor – so that the consumer pays nothing upfront. "The consumer doesn't feel the pinch," the Secretary said.

INBRIEF

Centre hikes windfall gains tax on diesel, ATF for exports

With global crude prices still elevated, the Finance Ministry on Saturday hiked the windfall gains tax on export bound diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) by 158% and 42%, respectively, with immediate effect. This is the first revision after the levy was reimposed on March 26. According to a set of notifications, the windfall levy on diesel would now be ₹55.5 a litre up from ₹21.5. Similarly, export-bound jet fuel will attract a levy of ₹42 a litre as against ₹29.5.

Orbicular's Ozempic generic gets U.S. FDA tentative nod

A generic version of Ozempic (semaglutide injection) developed by Hyderabad-based Orbicular Pharmaceutical Technologies in partnership with Florida-headquartered Apotex Corp. has received tentative approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The product will be marketed and commercialised in the U.S. by Apotex, which is the ANDA applicant, complex peptide-based generics developer Orbicular said in a release.

Work resumes on Bhutan's hydro project after 7-year halt

Work on Bhutan's 1,200 MW Punatsangchhu-I hydropower project has resumed after a seven-year suspension, with India's Power Minister Manohar Lal attending a key concrete pouring ceremony marking the restart of dam construction. The revival of the India-funded project, stalled since 2019 due to geological challenges, is seen as a major milestone in bilateral energy cooperation and is expected to pave the way for completion within five years. PTI

Hormuz deal to shape resumption of Qatari LNG/LPG imports

The complex dynamics of who ends up controlling the strait will be key in resuming imports to India, or other countries, for that matter

M. Kalyanaraman

During Mr. Puri's recent visit to Qatar, the two sides "emphasized the need for unimpeded freedom of navigation." PTI

India is looking to turn on the LNG-LPG tap soon from Qatar with Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri completing a two-day visit to the country and meeting with Qatar Energy officials and responsible ministers.

Qatar was contributing some 40% of India's LNG imports that contributed half of India's natural gas consumption. India's first ever LNG imports were intended to come from Ras Laffan, Qatar, some 25 years ago for the troubled Enron power plant in Dabhol. India has since then become a major customer of Qatar, taking in some 15% of its annual LNG production. Citing war, both sides had declared a force majeure termination of contracts.

Qatar produces LPG from its refineries, through a Gas-to-Liquids facility, as well as through natural gas processing, the last being the biggest contributor. Qatar's LPG provides some 30% of India's LPG imports. And the current crisis has impacted India's LPG requirements, much more than even crude oil.

Qatar has reported attacks in its GTL plant and petrochemical units that produce LPG. Fall in natural gas production, too, will in turn affect LPG output and getting natural gas production to full potential may well address the LPG supply to a large measure.

In the recent war, four LNG production trains, out of a total of 14 in Qatar, were damaged, reportedly reducing production capacity by 17%.

"Repairs are a matter of months, probably years, while ramp up of production from the undamaged 10 trains could be a matter of weeks," says Jean-Christian Heintz, founder at Wideangle LNG consulting.

But the bottleneck may well be shipping, i.e., exporting to India, not ramping up of production at Ras Laffan. Three of the five loading berths are operational, which implies an impairment of 40%.

"Further, the LNG voyage must be 100% safe. Qatar Energy cares a lot about reputation, safety and security," says Mr. Heintz. The complex dynamics of who ends up controlling the strait will be key in resuming LNG imports to India, or other countries, for that matter.

During Mr. Puri's visit, the two sides "emphasized the need for unimpeded freedom of navigation and the global flow of commerce to maintain global supply chains."

But tolls are on the negotiating table.

Qatar's North Field and Iran's South Pars are two halves of the same gas field, which may well mean the two countries need to have a working relationship into the future.

Stakeholders such as Adnoc have come out against any tolls, for Qatar, as this would mean paying for the repairs to get production up, on top of paying the toll, says Mr. Heintz.

'Observed three times rise in demand for domestic PNG'

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Kamal Kishore Chatiwal

Indraprastha Gas Ltd., which was receiving 600 connection requests a day prior to the West Asia conflict, is now seeing a surge of 2,100-2,200 connections per day, said its managing director Kamal Kishore Chatiwal.

"There has been a massive surge in demand. In the National Capital Region (NCR), especially, we are seeing registrations for new connections and old connections [activating dormant connections] has increased three times," he told *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board's Energy Security Conference here Friday.

"Earlier, we were doing 600 connections, now we have reached up to about 2,100 to 2,200, and going forward, considering the push, we are expecting it to increase to 3,000 per day."

On the outlook, the MD attributed the spike in activated connections to the government order that specified timelines for permissions, addressed procedural delays and standardised norms.

Mr. Chatiwal underlined that the city-gas distributors' initial focus was on areas that where already feasible. "First, we are focussing on the easier part, especially in IGL's case, there are four-five lakh connections, and with a little push we can convince the customer to transition to piped natural gas (PNG)," he said.

"These are connections where gas is already there, but there is some minor job to be completed and get a nod from the customer. It is not that I have to create a new network to make the gas available," he said.

Gazette push

Responding to a query about network expansion and the impact from the gazette notification putting forth directions for pushing piped gas infra, Mr. Chatiwal noted that permission had been expedited and in some cases, deemed permission.

However, the MD emphasised that the biggest push came in with the rationalisation of rates. "The best part is the rationalisation of rates.

The rates [that is, rental charges for pipelines] in some States were as high as ₹7 lakh per kilometre, which now have been standardised to ₹1,000 per kilometre," he said, adding, "That was among the factors which was hindering expansion."

First Indian vessel crosses Strait of Hormuz after ceasefire

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

An India-flagged liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker, Jag Vikram, has crossed the Strait of Hormuz, marking the first such transit by an Indian vessel since a temporary two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran was announced.

Ship tracking data showed the tanker moved through the strategic waterway between Friday night and Saturday morning and was located in the Gulf of Oman, east of the Strait on Saturday afternoon, proceeding eastwards.

The vessel movement was also confirmed by a government statement giving an update on developments in West Asia.

"The India-flagged LPG vessel Jag Vikram has safely crossed the Strait of Hormuz today [Saturday]," it stated.

"The vessel is carrying approximately 20,400 tonnes of LPG cargo with 24 seafarers onboard. It is expected to arrive at Mumbai on April 15, 2026."

Jag Vikram is the ninth Indian vessel to exit the Persian Gulf since early March, while about 15 India-flagged ships remain in the region, awaiting passage.

Owned by Mumbai-based Great Eastern Shipping Company, Jag Vikram is a mid-sized gas carrier with a deadweight capacity of over 26,000 tonnes.

The government said in a statement that port operations across India remained normal, with no congestion reported.

"The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways continues to coordinate with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Missions, and maritime stakeholders to ensure seafarer welfare and uninterrupted maritime operations," the statement added.

Goyal holds talks with Saudi minister on strengthening supply chains

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday held discussions with Saudi Arabia's Trade Minister Majid bin Abdullah Al Qassabi on ways to strengthen supply chains disrupted due to the West Asia crisis, after holding talks with his counterparts from the UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait.

All these countries are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with which India is negotiating a free trade agreement.

The commerce ministry, in a statement, said that Mr. Goyal had a virtual call with Qassabi.

"The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral trade and expressed optimism for early progress in the India-GCC FTA negotiations," it said.

Both sides noted the strain conflict has put on regional supply chains and stressed the need for an early recovery through coordinated efforts to ensure smooth trade flows, it said.

Mr. Goyal highlighted India's steps to support exports to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region.

The joint attack launched by the U.S. and Israel on Iran had led to severe disruptions in the movement of ships in international waters, and has posed challenges for exporters to ship goods to the Gulf region, with which India had a bilateral trade of $178 billion in 2024-25 ($56.87 billion exports and $121.67 billion imports).

Centre meets seafood exporters, offers support

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a meeting with seafood exporters, held here on Friday, the Union Fisheries Ministry emphasised the need for sustained market and product diversification, importance of strict regulatory compliance, including adherence to antibiotic bans, and strengthened traceability systems to find new export destinations. In a release, the Ministry said on Saturday that the meeting, chaired by Union Fisheries Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh, also discussed strategies to expand global market reach.

The meeting noted that India's seafood exports have crossed a new milestone, growing from ₹62,000 crore last year to approximately ₹68,000 crore this year, reflecting a net increase of about ₹6,000 crore. It was organised to provide a "structured platform" for interaction between the Government and the seafood industry and to obtain feedback from exporters on current challenges to market access, pricing pressures and compliance requirements. It also discussed measures required for enhancing value addition, market diversification and marine export expansion from islands, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and high seas.

Mr. Singh congratulated exporters for their efforts in enhancing seafood exports. "Despite global uncertainties, India's seafood exports have recorded robust growth, driven largely by strong performance in non-U.S. markets," the Minister said. On EEZ Rules, he said the framework is being operationalised through 'access passes', with priority being accorded to cooperative societies to promote inclusive growth. The Minister, speaking on the export potential of high value species such as tuna from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, the EEZ and the high seas, asked exporters to focus on improved onboard handling, robust cold chain infra, and exploration of alternative markets to reduce post harvest losses and strengthen the export ecosystem.

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POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH

XXXIX CONVOCATION

Please refer to advertisement published in various leading newspapers on 10.04.2029 vide which the schedule of XXXIX Convocation was intimated. **Now the same has been re-scheduled for 30th April, 2026 in the Bhargava Auditorium of PGIMER, Chandigarh.** A full dress rehearsal will be held on **Wednesday, the 29th April, 2026 at 9:00 AM** in the Bhargava Auditorium. **It is compulsory for all recipients of degrees/medals to attend the rehearsal. Those who fail to participate in the rehearsal will not be allowed to take part on the day of Convocation**. Kindly intimate the confirmation for participation in the Convocation by **15th April, 2026 through google form link (bit.ly/39convocation). The list of awardees & detailed information is available on the website of the Institute. (http://pgimer.edu.in)**

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KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Central Offices, Stores and Purchase Dept, K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560 027

No.:KST/CO/S&P/27/2026-27 — **Date:11.04.2026**

NOTICE INVITING TENDER No.01 Dated: 11.04.2026

Tenders (Pre-qualification and or commercial offers) through e-procurement portal **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** are invited for supply of the following Goods/Services/ Equipment:

Tender Nos as per E-Portal	Nomenclature of Items/ Services/ Equipment	Tender Value in Crores Rs. (Approx)	Last date for submission of tender @ 17.00hrs
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0288	Procurement of Tyre, tube Flap sets, tubeless tyres and additional tubes & Flaps	40.00	12.05.2026
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0292	Procurement of OAT (Organic Acid Technology) for BS-VI tata & Ashok Leyland Buses	1.95	28.04.2026
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0287	Procurement of Cold Applied Self Adhesive Polymer Modified Bituminous Composite membrane with Aluminum Foil"	1.00	21.04.2026
KSRTC/2026-27/ SE2712	Providing Fumigation Service for Buses of KSRTC	0.60	28.04.2026
SHORT TERM TENDER			
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0289	Procurement of Pre-cured Tread Rubber with Allied Materials.	8.00	18.04.2026
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0293	Procurement of Jumbo thermal paper Rolls for ETM	7.00	18.04.2026
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0291	Procurement of Automotive Grease	3.00	28.04.2026
KSRTC/2026-27/ IND0290	Procurement ERW GI Square Tubes & CR MS Round Tubes	2.50	28.04.2026

Further any addendum /corrigendum in respect of change in calendar of events, specification and scope of work other tender terms and conditions etc, will be uploaded/ published through e-portal only.

NOTE:- Interested suppliers need to register in the e-procurement portal. For further information log into **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** In case of further assistance, contact e-procurement cell (Phone. No. 080-46010000/080-68948777). Interested bidders may also contact e-procurement cell for training on bid submission. Mail to **Support@eprochelpdesk.com** for further information if required. In case of bidders need assistance from KSRTC, can communicate at **cosp@ksrtc.org**, (contact: 7760990225, 7760990224)

Sd/-
CONTROLLER OF STORES & PURCHASES
(Tender Inviting Authority)

DIPR/CP/JA/158/2026-27

भारत सरकार का उद्यम/रक्षा मंत्रालय/GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
एडवांस्ड वेपंस एंड इक्यूपमेंट इंडिया लिमिटेड/ADVANCED WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT INDIA LIMITED
आयुध निर्माणी, तिरुचिरापल्ली/ORDNANCE FACTORY, TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति आमंत्रित करने की सूचना (एनआईईओआई)
NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (NIEOI)

अध्यक्ष एवं प्रबंध निदेशक, मेसर्स एडब्ल्यूईआईएल–कानपुर के लिए तथा उनकी ओर से, आयुध निर्माणी तिरुचिरापल्ली, तमिलनाडु–620 016 के मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, प्रतिष्ठित भारतीय फर्मों/संयुक्त उद्यमों/कंसोर्टियम/सहयोगियों से निम्नलिखित मशीन के लिए अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति (ईओआई) आमंत्रित करते है/For and on behalf of the CMD, AWEIL-Kanpur, the Chief General Manager, Ordnance Factory, Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu–620 016 invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed Indian Firms/Joint Venture/Consortium/ Collaboration for below mentioned Machine.

क्रं.सं. Sl.No.	सीपीपीपी ई प्रकाशन सिस्टम निविदा आईडी सं./CPPP ePublishing System Tender ID No.	मशीन/प्लांट का नाम Name of the Machine / Plant	मात्रा Qty.
1	2026_DoDP_832999_1Dtd : 20.03.2026. (Tender Type : EOI)	राइफलिंग मशीन–मध्यम कैलिबर शस्त्र बैरल निर्माण/Rifling Machine – Medium calibre weapon barrel manufacturing.	संख्या–01 1 Number

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए, फर्मों से अनुरोध है कि वे सीपीपीपी पोर्टल की वेबसाइट **https://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app** पर **टेंडर आई.डी** सं. 2026_DoDP_832999_1 **दि. 20.03.2026** के द्वारा प्रकाशित अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति दस्तावेजों/ईओआई के अनुबंधों को देखें/डाउनलोड करें। **अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति प्रस्ताव जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि** : 20.05.2026, 16:00 बजे/For detailed information, firms are requested to see / download the EOI documents in website **https://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app** vide **Tender ID** No. 2026_DoDP_832999_1dated **20.03.2026. Last date for submission of EOI offer** : 20.05.2026; 16.00 PM.

हस्ता./Sd/-
एस. रामकृष्णन, भा.आ.नि.से/S.Ramakrishnan IOFS
कृते मुख्य महाप्रबंधक/For Chief General Manager,
आयुध निर्माणी, तिरुचिरापल्ली–620016/Ordnance Factory, Tiruchirappalli-620016

Municipal Corporation Udaipur
Town hall link road, Udaipur (Raj.) - 313001
Telephone: 0294-2421255, 2420013 Email:commngm-uda-rj@nic.inWebsite :- https://www.udaipurmc.org/

Nit No.: MCU/------/2026-27/.H A / C N / 26-27/45 — Date:- 08/04/26

Expression of interest E-01/2026-27
Work No :-

Municipal Corporation, Udaipur invites online unconditional EoI under Single Stage two envelope system through e-procurement portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** from eligible bidders as per criteria mentioned in bid document for Annual Rate contract : Collection, Transportation and Processing of Commercial solid waste of All Commercial Establishments of Udaipur City and Operation And maintenance of Balicha, Titardi MRF facilities and Titardi compost plant

Name of work	Estimated cost/Revenue of work	Bid Security 02% of Estimated cost	Bid document Fee + GST 18%	Processing Fee	Period of Completion (in Month)
Collection, Transportation and Processing of Commercial solid waste of All Commercial Establishments of Udaipur City and Operation And maintenance of Balicha, Titardi MRF facilities and Titardi compost plant	8.00 Crores	16,00,000/-	5,900/-	2,500/-	24 Months

Other information can be seen on the web portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**, **www.udaipurmc.org**, **www.udaipurmunicipal.org**, **http://sppp.raj.nic.in**.

UBN NO. UNP2627WLRC00005
Raj.Samwad/C/26/647

Commissioner
Municipal Corporation, Udaipur

Is BSF's idea to have reptiles in rivers along Bangladesh border sound?

Divya Gandhi
BENGALURU

The Border Security Force (BSF) has come up with a curious idea to prevent infiltration from Bangladesh: releasing reptiles into the rivers that run along the border, *The Hindu* reported on April 6.

"Snakes or crocodiles" introduced in vulnerable riverine gaps should be explored for feasibility, per a directive to the BSF on March 26. The reptiles could deter infiltration and criminal activities in the riverine border, according to an internal communiqué seen by *The Hindu*.

What do conservationists and scientists make of this unprecedented proposal? And are there precedents anywhere in the world?

One conservationist told *The Hindu* that introducing reptiles could "cause serious conflict with the local communities that live there" because they are bound to disperse from their designated areas. "Technically, they should not be introducing any species into an ecosystem like the Sundarbans. There are already saltwater crocodiles and snake species such as cobras, Russell's vipers and kraits in that region."

The survival of the animals is also important, and introducing alien species is never a good idea: "The introduction of any new species or even a large number of existing species can create an imbalance in the ecosystem. In the long run, this may be counterproductive."

As for deterring 'infiltrators', the source said the presence of crocodiles and snakes is already known to people who cross the borders and that "they must be taking precautions to avoid both."

We must remember that the species will not stick to one part of the border, but will spread on both sides and in fact could be a "challenge for our border patrolling agencies to deal with", they added. "The only reference I can recall is that the invading army of Alexander was supposedly stopped by elephants and snakes, "which is not proven," said the source.

A third scientist said translocating wild animals is always "a tricky proposition". First, several animals, including crocodiles, are territorial. "Moving them to new locations means they are in unfamiliar territory, which reduces their chances of survival."

Even if they weren't territorial, new places come with "unfamiliar risks". "Often, such animals come into contact with humans, increasing conflict, as has been shown for many species including leopards."

Translocations could thus reduce their odds of survival, have unknown negative effects on the local ecosystem, and increase conflict with local, often marginalised, communities. If there are criminal elements, these translocations "could unwittingly provide them with an extra source of protein," the scientist said.

India shares a 4,096-km border with Bangladesh that passes through hills, rivers, and valleys. The BSF has been patrolling it to prevent illegal immigration and illicit activities. The barbed wire fences on several stretches have reportedly become obsolete.

Aluminium alternative emerges to costly catalysts in pharma

Research has found aluminium can be made to behave in the same way that makes transition metals such good catalysts; the stakes are high for India, which currently meets its transition metal needs almost entirely through imports

Pratik Kashiramka

For more than a century, aluminium has been chemistry's workhorse, albeit limited in its abilities as a catalyst. New work reported recently in *Nature* may change that.

Transition metals such as palladium, rhodium, and platinum underpin some of the most important industrial chemical processes in the world. India's pharmaceutical and agrochemical industries also depend on them. But they are rare and expensive.

The new study, by researchers at the Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, has suggested that aluminium can be made to behave in the same way that makes those metals catalytically powerful, opening a potential path to cheaper alternatives.

Transition metals are good catalysts because of their oxidation states – a measure of how many electrons an atom can give up or take on. They can shift easily between oxidation states, temporarily receiving electrons from one molecule and donating them to another, breaking old chemical bonds and forming new ones in the process. This shuttling enables a reaction called redox catalysis, and helps speed up important processes in industrial chemistry like the Heck reaction in modern drug synthesis.

The problem is aluminium's +3 oxidation state – the condition in which it surrenders all three of its outer electrons – is so chemically stable that it almost never exists in any other form in nature.

In the new work, a supporting molecule called a ligand was bound to the aluminium atom, altering its chemical behaviour. Liu Leo Liu, the study's corresponding author and associate professor in the University's Department of Chemistry, called the idea "simple but ambitious".

The researchers' ligand of choice was a carbazolyl compound. They used it in a reaction called alkyne cyclotrimerisation – in which three alkynes (hydrocarbon molecules with at least one carbon-carbon triple bond) join to form the substituted benzene rings that are the building blocks of many pharmaceuticals and agrochemicals.

The aluminium catalyst first binds to an alkyne molecule, forming a three-membered ring. A second alkyne then inserts itself into this structure, turning it into a five-membered ring. The catalyst rearranges this intermediate into a more stable configuration before a third alkyne is inserted, creating a seven-membered ring. The catalyst then expels itself, ready to begin again.

By capturing and studying several stages of this process directly, the researchers found that a single catalyst molecule could help up to 2,290 product molecules form before it stopped working – a measure called turnover number (TON).

"Within the specific niche of main-group redox catalysis, a TON of 2,290 is exceptionally high, but in large-scale industrial applications, transition metal catalysts often achieve TONs in the tens or hundreds of thousands (and sometimes millions)," Sakya S. Sen, senior principal scientist at the National Chemical Laboratory in Pune, whose research group specialises in similar reactions, said. "I read the work as an extraordinary academic milestone; fundamentally, it is still a proof-of-concept," he added. Prof. Liu was cautious as well: "At this stage, we see the work as a platform discovery rather than an immediate 'drop-in' industrial catalyst." This is partly because the catalyst is sensitive to air and moisture, only works as designed in certain solvents, and has thus far been demonstrated for only one reaction type. "The near-term goal ... is expanding generality and simplifying practical handling; applications will follow once a compelling process case emerges," Prof. Liu said.

The stakes of this kind of research are acute for India. Swadhin Mandal, whose lab at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata, has been working on comparable catalytic systems, said, "It is now widely recognised that certain essential elements will be depleted within the next 100 years due to their increasing industrial demand."

India meets almost all its demand for palladium, platinum, and rhodium through imports. An aluminium-based alternative, made from a metal India has in abundance and at a fraction of the cost, could eventually significantly reduce that dependence.

Both Prof. Mandal and Dr. Sen were clear that the bridge between a laboratory discovery and an industrial process requires deliberate long-term investments, but the timeline for that transition is uncertain. "It would be great if Indian industries come forward to co-develop such discoveries with Indian scientists to transform them into an industrial process," Prof. Mandal said. He added that the present study is also the product of five decades of background work.

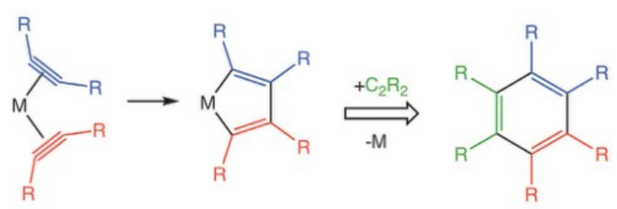
The Shenzhen team is already looking forward: "Our immediate goal is to broaden the scope of aluminium redox catalysis and explore additional reaction types beyond alkyne cyclotrimerisation," Prof. Liu said.

(Pratik Kashiramka is an independent science journalist.)

Clever chemistry

Transition metals speed up the reactions used to synthesise drugs but are expensive

- Transition metals are essential industrial catalysts but remain expensive and rare compared to common aluminium
- Researchers have used a specific ligand to allow aluminium to mimic the flexible oxidation states of transition metals
- This new aluminium catalyst successfully facilitated alkyne cyclotrimerisation to create the building blocks of various pharma products



A simplified representation of the alkyne cyclotrimerisation reaction. R denotes a functional group and M is the catalyst metal. PUBLIC DOMAIN

- While the turnover number is impressive for this category, the study remains a fundamental proof of concept
- The challenges before this catalyst can be used in industry include the catalyst's sensitivity to air and the solvent
- Developing affordable aluminium catalysts could eventually reduce the import bill for precious metal supplies

The 'survivor syndrome' in those left behind after a layoff

John Xavier

On the morning of March 31, IT firm Oracle eliminated up to 30,000 jobs – roughly 18% of its global workforce – in a single automated email with no prior conversation with HR or warning from line managers. Access to company systems was revoked the same day. In India, about 12,000 employees were let go.

The layoffs come right after Oracle closed a profitable quarter with a $6 billion bottom line – revenue of $17.2 billion, up 22% year-on-year. The company's future looked secure with contracted future revenue at $553 billion, up 325%, almost entirely driven by AI deals.

With that kind of order book and profits, a layoff signals a strategic shift as the company liquidates its workforce to fund AI data centre infrastructure. Analysts have predicted cutting 20,000 to 30,000 employees could generate $8 to $10 billion in additional annual free cash flow. This will allow the company to reallocate payroll cost to AI infrastructure buildout. That in turn will allow Oracle to fulfil its remaining performance obligations.

While those who were let go will undoubtedly feel resentful, employees who are still on the company's payroll may feel something different.

Organisational psychologists have a name for it: survivor syndrome. Research pioneered by Joel Brockner at Columbia Business School shows that layoff survivors consistently develop negative reactions like reduced productivity and creativity, erosion of trust in management, and significantly higher intentions to leave.

Mr. Brockner's research identified a mechanism that most organisations consistently underestimate: survivors do not evaluate what happened to their colleagues in isolation. They use it as a signal of how they themselves will be treated. Surviving employees want to feel the process was handled in a just and fair manner. They use the fairness displayed in the dismissal of others as an indicator of how management will treat them in future.

IT firm Oracle recently cut 18% of its global workforce. Studies show layoff survivors are likely to develop negative reactions. FILE PHOTO

DECODED

Oracle's pre-dawn automated email, same-day system revocation, and no manager conversation give an unambiguous answer to that question. Based on these perceptions of fairness, employees decide to what extent they will commit to the organisation and whether they will put in their best effort or withdraw to the minimum acceptable level and potentially leave for another job.

Mr. Brockner's research further notes that when individuals are faced with bad outcomes, they want procedures to be fairly applied and be treated well during the process. Outcomes like losing colleagues, absorbing their workload, and working in a diminished team might seem like an accepted reality. But the way in which this decision was communicated creates a trust deficit as the layoff message was legally sufficient, not humanly adequate.

The behavioural consequences are immense as survivors can stop sharing concerns, becoming risk-averse and disengaged. This in turn will curtail creativity in the organisation. The human capital is now least likely to perform at the level Oracle needs.

There is also the problem of workload redistribution. While employees routinely assume duties of absent peers, layoffs create an entirely new scenario. As headcount shrinks by nearly a fifth, survivors will be made to absorb responsibilities disproportionately. Also, both formal and informal social networks within organisations will be rewired as roles and routines will be remapped in the new context.

This compounds the stress of survivors, reducing their commitment and motivation and increasing their intention to leave. Critically, the employees most likely to act on that intention are those with the most market value – precisely the ones Oracle needs to fulfil its $553 billion in contracted obligations.

Organisations that get this right – supporting survivors as well as those departing, with transparent and fair processes – are likely to differentiate themselves from competitors following large-scale change. Failure to do so leads, ironically, to the demotivation and organisational exit of the very people the company chose to keep.

SNAPSHOTS

Device allows UTI diagnosis after single patient visit

Researchers have made a new point-of-care platform called iPRISM to diagnose urinary tract infections. In a double-blind clinical study, iPRISM screened for infections with 81% specificity and 82% sensitivity at 75 minutes. For antibiotic susceptibility testing, iPRISM classified 100% of samples exposed to gentamicin in just 30 minutes and spotted ciprofloxacin resistance in 90 minutes. The speed can allow doctors to prescribe the right treatment after one patient visit and support better antibiotic stewardship.

Change in land cover predicts deadliness of landslides

After analysing landslides in 46 countries over 60 years, scientists have reported that land-use changes driven by human activities, such as deforestation and urbanisation, influence fatality rates more than physical factors like steep terrain or heavy rainfall. The trend has been most pronounced in low- and lower-middle-income nations, where mountainous land cover changed by nearly 50% since 1960. This is why, they reported, Rwanda has more deadly landslides than Nepal despite bearing similar landslide risk.

Nightlights are not just getting brighter everywhere

New data challenge the view that nightlights are becoming brighter. Based on satellite data from 2014 to 2022, researchers found nightscape both brightening and dimming. While global brightening, mainly due to urban expansion and rural electrification, increased radiance by 34% from 2014, dimming due to energy-saving policies , using LEDs, and conflicts offset nearly half of that growth. They concluded that both brightening and dimming have intensified.

Question Corner

Waters at sea

Why do the oceans have currents?

The earth formed as a molten world. Around 4 billion years ago, its surface cooled enough for water vapour to condense. Torrential rains then fell for centuries, filling basins to create the first oceans around 3.8 billion years ago.

Once liquid water covered large parts of the surface, three forces set it in motion.

The sun heated the atmosphere unevenly, creating winds. These winds pushed the ocean's surface, dragging the top layer of water along. The sun also heated water near the equator directly, making it less dense, so it rose and spread towards the poles.

Meanwhile, cold water sank at the poles while warmer water rose near the equator, establishing a 'conveyor belt' of circulation called thermohaline circulation.

Finally, the earth's rotation deflected these moving water masses sideways, bending currents into large swirling circles called gyres. As tectonic plates shifted and continents formed, landmasses blocked the water's path and forced it into specific routes.

Readers may send their questions / answers to science@thehindu.co.in

What is Anthropic's Claude Mythos model?

Is Mythos really that capable? Why is this LLM not being made available to the public? What is Project Glasswing?

Aroon Deep

The story so far:

On April 7, Anthropic, the AI company behind the coding- and productivity-focused Large Language Model (LLM) family Claude, announced Mythos. This is its most powerful model yet, capable of finding bugs in old software that have not been flagged by humans so far. Anthropic said that it would not release the LLM widely, but only to a consortium of over 40 companies, which will use it to scan decades-old code to find software vulnerabilities not detected by humans yet.

What is Claude and why is it a notable product in AI circles?

Claude is an LLM developed by San Francisco-based Anthropic, like OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Gemini. However, its reputation for quality outputs in fields such as coding have lent it a reputation unlike any other LLM on the market. Claude runs through a command-line interface as well as a suite of apps for different platforms, published by Anthropic.

In increasing order of sophistication, Anthropic's other LLMs are Haiku, Sonnet, and Opus. All three have been noted for their performance and reasoning capabilities, which are critical to composing code and performing tasks agentically. AI firms often don't open-source their models, restricting access by rationing access to use and employing subscription- or usage-based pricing for users.

While Mythos is arguably the first to develop a model that can identify vulnerabilities, other models with these capabilities could appear eventually

In spite of generally significant pricing for both usage-based pricing and subscriptions, most AI companies are not profitable, and are staking huge amounts of operational expenditure in the hopes of coming out on top in the AI race. Anthropic is not an outlier, since it does not make profits, but its usage limits and pricing are the subject of frequent complaints among users.

How is Mythos different from Claude's other models?

Cybersecurity has been an unintended side effect of these models' coding prowess. Opus was able to find multiple bugs in highly scrutinised pieces of open-source software, which are used in both private and public IT systems heavily. Human reviewers frequently find bugs, or security vulnerabilities, and they are "patched" so that attackers cannot exploit them to remotely shut down or gain access to computer systems.

Opus found bugs that humans missed, one Anthropic executive said at a talk in March, leading to worries within the company that its technology could be used by hackers to exploit, rather than find and patch, vulnerabilities.

Mythos has already been able to find "hundreds" of "severe" security vulnerabilities. Anthropic announced Project Glasswing, a defensive cybersecurity initiative, in partnership with Microsoft, Apple, Cisco, and other companies whose products and services form the backbone of several other companies and products across cyberspace.

Is Mythos really that capable? What is the problem if everyone has access?

It is not possible to know exactly how capable Mythos is since only a select group has access to it. But the fact that Anthropic has been able to announce specific vulnerabilities it has been able to co-develop patches for in established pieces of open source software indicates that its value as a cybersecurity tool is too significant for large IT and software firms to ignore.

The issue with making Mythos available generally is a transitional one. While Mythos is arguably the first to develop a model that can identify vulnerabilities, it is likely that other models with these capabilities will appear eventually. Anthropic's logic with Project Glasswing is that if the companies and individuals developing these foundational systems have access, they can get a head start in plugging vulnerabilities before attackers gain access to Mythos-class models and start attempting cyberattacks with these capabilities.

What are the implications for India? Is the government doing anything?

The Indian IT industry relies on a range of foreign platforms and software, and often builds its own bespoke software solutions. If Project Glasswing finds a wide range of bugs before Mythos-class models proliferate, Indian companies would benefit by patching all the software they use in time. However, their own software may be vulnerable to sophisticated attackers. No Indian IT firm has been publicly listed as a Project Glasswing partner as yet. The Data Security Council of India under Nasscom has been holding meetings on Mythos over the last week, its CEO Vinayak Godse told *The Hindu*. The IT Ministry and its subordinate Indian Computer Emergency Response Team have been studying the implications of Mythos, a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

What is the SIR controversy in West Bengal?

How many names have been deleted from the electoral rolls, and why? What are the logical discrepancies identified by the ECI? Why were large numbers of voters placed under adjudication, and how was this resolved? How has the SIR process reshaped the State's political contest?

Sreeparna Chakrabarty

The story so far:

What began as an exercise aimed at cleaning up electoral rolls, by removing duplicate, migrated, and deceased voters, and identifying "illegal immigrants", has turned into a major controversy in West Bengal.

The Election Commission of India (ECI)'s Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has been conducted in 13 States and Union Territories so far. However, it is in West Bengal that terms such as 'adjudication', 'logical discrepancies' and 'voter tribunals' have cropped up. The SIR process has also led to a "trust deficit" between the ECI, a constitutional body, and the elected Trinamool Congress government, according to the Supreme Court.

How has the SIR impacted the electoral rolls of West Bengal?

The SIR began in West Bengal on November 4, 2025, with 7.66 crore voters on the list. The draft rolls published on December 16 showed that over 63 lakh names had been deleted, bringing down the number of voters to around 7 crore. The deleted names were marked under the ASDD (absent, shifted, dead, and duplicate)

The judicial officers struck down 27 lakh of the 60 lakh names. Those whose names have not been cleared can now approach the 19 special tribunals set up by the ECI

People gather to appeal before a tribunal over issues related to the SIR, ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections, at Alipore, in Kolkata. PTI

category. However, of the 7 crore in the draft list, 30 lakh names were categorised as "unmapped voters" (no link with the last SIR conducted in 2002) and 1.20 crore names with logical discrepancies.

What is the logical discrepancy category? What was the result of this exercise?

Voters under the logical discrepancy category were checked against a highly contentious five-point list even if they were mapped to the 2002 SIR list. Under a new AI algorithm, the ECI identified five types of discrepancies: (a) spelling differences in names between 2002 and 2025 rolls; (b) cases where more than six voters linked themselves to a single ancestor; (c) age gaps between a voter and their parent falling beyond the 15-45 year range; (d) cases where the differences between the grandparents' age and the voters' age was less than 40 years; and (e) instances where the voters' gender did not align with the name provided.

After the ECI hearings, about 60 lakh of the 1.5 crore cases remained disputed, with Electoral Registration Officers and micro-observers appointed by the Election Commission of India unable to agree on their eligibility. This process resulted in over 60 lakh names falling in the 'under adjudication' category. They were excluded from voting pending verification.

What happened to voters placed in the 'under adjudication' category?

The Supreme Court in March took the "extraordinary" decision to involve the judiciary in the SIR process saying the persistent "trust deficit" between the Mamata Banerjee government and the ECI had led to a "stalemate", with time running out.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant requested the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court to deploy a force of serving and retired judicial officers to take over the quasi-judicial task of Electoral Registration Officers/Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (EROs/AEROs). The CJI said the rolls published on February 28 would not be treated as the final one and those cleared in the adjudication would be added in subsequent supplementary lists. Thus, the over 60 lakh 'under adjudication' cases were heard by nearly 700 judicial officers from West Bengal and neighbouring Odisha and Jharkhand.

How many names were cleared by the judicial officers? What is the status of those whose names did not make it?

The judicial officers struck down 27 lakh of the 60 lakh names. Those whose names have not been cleared can now approach the 19 special tribunals set up by the ECI. However, with the ECI freezing electoral rolls for the upcoming elections, these people are unlikely to get to vote in the upcoming Assembly polls even if their names are cleared by the tribunals. A window of hope remains in the April 13 hearing in the Supreme Court, however.

So far, the total number of names deleted from the pre-SIR 2025 list is 90.8 lakh. The number of eligible voters in Bengal is 6.77 crore.

What has been the political fallout?

While the BJP, the main Opposition in the State, has strongly backed the process, the Trinamool has questioned the timing and scale of the process. Initially, the party had protested against the short timeline for the exercise, arguing it would lead to errors. However, since the process began, the SIR has become the main electoral plank in the Assembly polls, with the Trinamool accusing the ECI of playing the BJP's game and trying to disenfranchise people who are loyal voters of the BJP. The Trinamool has repeatedly approached the ECI as well as the Supreme Court with Ms. Banerjee herself appearing before the apex court to argue her case.

What are the other issues flagged by civil society and Opposition?

Civil society activists such as Yogendra Yadav and Prashant Bhushan have attacked the Bengal SIR accusing the ECI of "deliberately" targeting Muslim voters. At a press conference in Delhi, My. Yadav said, "It is not revision, it is rewriting." He gave the example of Nandigram, where he said 25% of the voters are Muslim. "95% of deletions here were Muslim voters," he noted. The maximum number of voters have been deleted from Murshidabad, Malda and Uttar Dinajpur districts, which are predominantly Muslim in composition. He also said women have been targeted, especially in Matua-dominated areas.

How was the U.S.-Iran ceasefire deal reached?

How did the two-week ceasefire come about and how did Pakistan become involved in mediation? Why has Israel reacted negatively to the U.S.-Iran ceasefire negotiations? What is happening in Islamabad now, and what are the chances of the talks succeeding?

Kallol Bhattacherjee

The story so far:

In the early hours of Saturday, an Iranian delegation, led by the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf, reached Islamabad and was welcomed by Field Marshal Asim Munir and Foreign Minister Mohammed Ishaq Dar at the airport. They were followed by the arrival of the U.S. negotiating team, led by Vice President J.D. Vance, special envoy Steve Witkoff, and Jared Kushner, son-in-law of U.S. President Donald Trump. The mediated talks between the U.S. and Iran are aimed at cementing a permanent ceasefire, following the two-week ceasefire declared earlier last week.

How did the two-week ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran come about?

On March 24, *The New York Times* reported that the U.S. had sent Iran a 15-point plan to end the war, more than three weeks after the U.S., along with Israel, had started bombing the country. The publication said that the plan was handed over to the Iranian side by Pakistan's Gen. Munir. It is believed that he had been in contact with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the powerful paramilitary force of Iran that emerged more powerful in Iran after Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was assassinated by a U.S.-Israeli strike.

As backchannel discussions progressed, President Trump said in a Truth Social post on April 8 that Washington would halt its attacks on Iran and observe a two-week ceasefire, provided

During the war waged by the U.S. and Israel on Iran, Pakistan repeatedly condemned Israel, but maintained channels with Iran, Gulf monarchies, and the U.S.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with the Iranian delegation led by Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, in Islamabad. PTI

Tehran agreed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Mr. Trump referred to the proposal as a "double-sided ceasefire", indicating that it would include concessions by both sides. He claimed that the U.S. has achieved its military goals and that the conflict could be resolved.

Mr. Trump had earlier warned in a social media post that a civilisation could be "wiped out". Before that, he had posted a profanities-laden message indicating his frustration over Iran's stranglehold over the Strait of Hormuz. He had set a deadline for his final decision: 8 p.m. (EST) on April 7. Before the deadline, he announced the ceasefire.

Coinciding with his announcement, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran would stop attacks if the U.S. and Israel paused theirs. Minutes before Mr. Trump's deadline, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif posted on X that Iran and the U.S. "along with their allies, have agreed to a ceasefire everywhere, including Lebanon and elsewhere, effective immediately."

What are the chances of the negotiations succeeding?

The main challenge comes from Israel, which has responded angrily to the ceasefire. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's political rivals have said the Americans did not consult him while exchanging messages with Iran. Israel had explicitly described the war's strategic objective as "regime change in Iran". With the U.S. opening negotiations with the same Iranian state, it appears that the war has not achieved Israel's stated strategic objectives.

Soon after the announcement of the ceasefire, Israel bombed nearly a hundred targets in Beirut, claiming they were Hezbollah command-and-control centres. The attacks seemed aimed at provoking Iran and undermining the fragile ceasefire. However, Iran has stuck to the ceasefire, while also declaring that it will not abandon its allies in Lebanon.

Italy and Spain have condemned Israel's bombing and have called on the country to support the ceasefire framework being negotiated in Pakistan. Gulf Cooperation Council states have broadly expressed support for de-escalation efforts, although Iran continues to face a trust deficit with the UAE.

Why was Pakistan chosen by the U.S. for negotiations?

Pakistan has a long history of being an intermediary in U.S. diplomatic initiatives. It enabled the U.S.-China outreach in 1971 and the 2020 Doha Accord between the U.S. and the Taliban. During the war waged by the U.S. and Israel on Iran, Pakistan repeatedly condemned Israel, but maintained communication channels with Iran, Gulf monarchies, and the U.S. Pakistan's civilian leaders worked the telephone lines, and the general headquarters handled the IRGC. This was a crucial responsibility as the IRGC's consent would have been required for any ceasefire deal.

Is Pakistan playing an independent role as a mediator?

Multiple regional and global stakeholders became involved in opening informal communication channels as the U.S.-Israel war against Iran escalated into a wider regional conflict following the disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. With concerns rising about the safety of South Asian diaspora in the Gulf, and about energy security needs at home, multiple South Asian countries, including Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and India, began talking to regional leaders. Though the initial exchange of the U.S.'s 15-point and Iran's 10-point conditions reportedly took place through Pakistan's military channels, the final draft shared globally through Mr. Sharif 's social media accounts referred to a "draft," which was widely interpreted on social media as indicating the involvement of external parties, including the U.S., in shaping the formulation.

What has been the role of other powers, such as China and Russia, in this ceasefire?

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has repeatedly thanked China, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, Egypt, and Qatar for "their invaluable and full support in the direction of achieving a ceasefire and granting an opportunity to seek a comprehensive and final solution through peaceful diplomatic efforts." President Trump has also thanked China for playing a role in convincing Iran to come to the negotiating table.

What will be the modality of negotiations?

Unlike previous mediations in the cases of Afghanistan and China, the meeting this time is taking place in Islamabad because of security risks involved in the process. Israel has harmed negotiators in the past, such as on September 9, 2025, when it attacked the negotiating team of Hamas in Doha, killing five members. Security risks also stem from Pakistan's own home-grown terror outfits. A local holiday was declared in Islamabad before the arrival of the delegations.

The White House said on Saturday that the U.S., Iran, and Pakistan held trilateral face-to-face talks. According to a report on Iran's state-owned Press TV, discussions began on a political level and entered the expert-level phase, involving economic, military, legal and nuclear experts. Mr. Trump said on April 8 that he wanted long-term peace in West Asia. Iran, despite allegations that Israel had violated the truce, stuck to the talks. Now, they have to narrow the wide gaps between their respective proposals to find common ground.

Ayatollah's allies in Lebanon

Hezbollah

After Israel killed Hassan Nasrallah in September 2024 and launched a ground offensive in Lebanon, many saw Hezbollah weakened; but over the past 40-plus days, the 'Party of God' has fired hundreds of rockets and drones, denying an easy victory to the invading Israeli forces

Stanly Johny

On April 8, after Donald Trump announced a two-week U.S.-Iran ceasefire, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the truce would apply across all fronts, including Lebanon. But Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, while supporting the U.S.-Iran ceasefire, said Lebanon was not included in the deal. The war on Iran began on February 28 with joint U.S.-Israel strikes that killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and several other senior leaders. On March 2, Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shia militant organisation which is also a close ally of Iran, fired rockets into Israel. Since then, Israel has pounded Lebanon. It launched a ground invasion on March 16, aiming to push Hezbollah to the north of the Litani River and seize all of southern Lebanon, which it calls a "buffer zone".

On April 8, after the Iran ceasefire was announced, Israel carried out its heaviest air strike in Lebanon since the war began, killing at least 200 people. The Lebanon front now threatens to unravel the ceasefire. Israel insists it will continue striking Lebanon. Iranian media claimed on Friday that Tehran's pressure has forced Israel to halt strikes on Beirut. As the U.S. and Iran started direct negotiations in Islamabad on Saturday, Lebanon remained the key point of friction. At the heart of the friction sits Hezbollah, which has been designated as a terrorist organisation by Israel, the U.S. and their allies.

The roots of Hezbollah go back to Israel's 1982 war on Lebanon, which the then Likud Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, said would bring "40 years of peace for Israel". Lebanon was in the grip of a devastating civil war that began in 1975. According to Lebanon's post-French Constitution, power was divided among the country's different communities – the Presidency is reserved for Christians, the Premiership for Sunnis and the Speakership for Shias. Roughly 40% of Lebanon's population is Arab Shia. The influx of the Palestinian refugees into Lebanon and the relocation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to Lebanon from Jordan in 1971 created fissures in the country's delicate confessional system, which led to the civil war.

AP

Israel attacked Lebanon in 1978 and 1982, first to push the PLO out of the border region and then out of the country. In 1982, the PLO agreed to leave Lebanon, but one community that bore the brunt of Israel's disproportionate bombing was the already marginalised Shias. Three years earlier, a geopolitical earthquake had shaken West Asia – in Iran, which was an American ally, Shia Mullahs captured power after bringing down a monarchy. Iran sensed an opportunity in Lebanon's chaos. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) helped mobilise thousands of Shias in Lebanon in 1982 to form a loose network of what was then unofficially called the "Islamic Resistance".

'Party of God'

One of the first targets of the Islamic Resistance was the Multinational Forces (MNF) deployed in Lebanon. In April 1983, the U.S. Embassy in Beirut was bombed, killing 63 people. In October, 305 people, mostly American and French soldiers, were killed in suicide attacks on their military barracks.

Following these attacks, the MNF withdrew from Lebanon, providing the first victory to the newly organised Shia militants. In 1985, the Islamic Resistance came up with a manifesto, calling for the "destruction" of the state of Israel, and declaring allegiance to Iran's Supreme Leader. According to some reports, it was Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader, who picked the name Hezbollah (literally "the Party of God") for the new movement.

Over the years, Hezbollah has built sprawling social, political and military networks with deep roots in Lebanon's Shia community. In southern Lebanon, a Shia stronghold, it carried out a disciplined, effective, popular guerrilla war against the occupying Israeli forces, turning the 'security zone' into an 'insecurity zone'. The party organisation has been built in a Leninist order, centralising authority in the hands of the Secretary-General. The chief would oversee a seven-member Shura council, like the politburo of a communist party, and then there are sub-councils. Its social network caters to the Shia working class, while the political and parliamentary councils have played the role of a kingmaker in Lebanon's fractured polity. Yet, the most important arm is the Jihad Council, which controls its military activities.

Israel assassinated Hezbollah's co-founder Abbas al-Musawi in 1992 as part of a policy of targeted killings to weaken rival outfits. But the man who succeeded Musawi, Hassan Nasrallah, turned Hezbollah into "a state within the state". In 2000, after 18 years of occupation, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak decided to unilaterally withdraw from southern Lebanon, which Hezbollah celebrated as "the first Arab victory in the history of Arab-Israeli conflict". But Israel's withdrawal did not quieten the Lebanese border. Hezbollah said it would continue to fight the Israelis as long as its occupation of Shebaa Farms and Palestinian territories continues. In its 2019 updated manifesto, Hezbollah reiterated its commitment for the destruction of Israel.

In 2006, after Hezbollah carried out a raid and abducted two Israeli soldiers, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert declared war against the militant group. The war lasted for over 30 days and even on the last day of fighting, Hezbollah launched hundreds of rockets into Israel. Israeli air strikes and ground attacks destroyed much of Hezbollah's military infrastructure, but the group survived, and emerged politically stronger in Lebanon. Since the 2006 war, there had been a tense calm on the Israel-Lebanon border. The calm was broken after the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack in Israel. When Israel launched an all-out war on Gaza, Hezbollah fired "solidarity" rockets into the occupied Shebaa Farms. Israel responded with heavy air strikes. In September 2024, Israel killed Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's chief, and several other top commanders.

New commander

Naim Qassem, a little-known 71-year-old cleric, succeeded Nasrallah. Three months later, Syria's Bashar al-Assad government, a key link between Hezbollah and Iran, collapsed. After suffering back-to-back setbacks, Hezbollah retreated to its political trenches. Israel, despite a ceasefire, kept striking Hezbollah targets inside Lebanon and the group barely responded, which created an impression that the 'Party of God' was weakened.

But such assumptions have been upended by Hezbollah. Since March 12, it has consistently launched rockets into Israel. Hezbollah appears to have used the 15-month period of retreat to rearm itself and adapt and prepare itself for the next round. Now, as the U.S. and Iran engage in talks to end the war, Israel faces a dilemma. Iran, which endured 39 days of U.S.-Israeli strikes, is pressing for a ceasefire in Lebanon. Mr. Trump has said he wants a deal with Iran. If Mr. Netanyahu continues to pound Lebanon, he risks undermining the U.S.-Iran truce. But if he halts the attacks under pressure, Hezbollah could emerge emboldened, compounding Israel's security challenges and Mr. Netanyahu's political troubles.

THE GIST

- When Israel launched an all-out war on Gaza after October 7, Hezbollah fired 'solidarity' rockets into the occupied Shebaa Farms and Israel responded with heavy air strikes
- In September 2024, Israel killed Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's chief, and several other top commanders, dealing a major setback to the group
- Naim Qassem, the little-known 71-year-old cleric who succeeded Nasrallah, prepared the party for the next round of fighting, which broke out on March 2, 2026

Nuclear paradox

Prototype fast breeder reactor

A milestone in India's nuclear ambitions, but one shadowed by limited oversight and persistent concerns over transparency and accountability

Vasudevan Mukunth

A fast breeder reactor (FBR) gets its name from two features. First, it 'breeds' more nuclear fuel than it consumes. Second, it uses fast neutrons – ones that haven't been slowed – to initiate nuclear fission.

France began building an FBR called Superphénix in 1976. After spending around $10 billion, the reactor became critical in 1985 and commercial in 1986. It operated for 11 years. However, it produced less than 20% of the energy it was capable of producing and, in all, met under 1% of France's electricity demand. Superphénix also spent 25 months on technical fixes and didn't run for 66 months for political reasons. In this time, the spot price of uranium also dropped from $40 a pound to $15, wiping out its rationale of saving uranium.

Similarly, Germany built an FBR called SNR-300 from 1972, completed it in 1985, but it never came online, due to political opposition and the Chernobyl disaster. The government cancelled the project in 1991. France and Germany have always been more technologically advanced and have had more mature manufacturing bases than India, and their

These failed experiments with FBRs outline obvious cautionary tales. India's first FBR with commercial potential, the prototype fast breeder reactor (PFBR) in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu, became critical on April 6. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was present at its fuel-loading event in 2024 and hailed the moment when it went critical. The PFBR is politically and energy-wise important for India – the latter because of its rationale that it will be more fuel-efficient than the fleet of pressurised heavy-water reactors (PHWRs) India currently operates and because it promises energy security in the long run. Yet this picture would be incomplete without accounting for the weight of past experience.

R. RAGU

The success of India's nuclear energy programme is owed in considerable, but oft-unacknowledged, part to political insulation. The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has minimal parliamentary or judicial oversight and resists substantive disclosures under the Right to Information Act. It has also not been above securitising dissent and keeping clearance and operational details out of public view. The PFBR itself has survived multiple governments, delays, and cost overruns *en route* to criticality.

But its barely mitigated authority also risks conditions in which the DAE can pursue the PFBR without public accountability. FBR technology is also nasty. The PFBR uses liquid sodium as a coolant. Sodium is very eager to react with almost anything, even air. So if the coolant leaks, it could take several power plant components down with it. Such a leak at the Monju reactor in Japan in 1995, followed by its operator's attempts to cover up the disaster, doomed the facility after the country had spent three decades and $15 billion developing it.

Unlike PHWRs, FBRs also respond more quickly to changes in the nuclear chain reaction, leaving their control systems with less room for error. FBRs produce more plutonium than they consume, using uranium as the primary fuel plus a small plutonium input – a reaction India needs for the third stage of its nuclear power programme, which will burn plutonium and thorium – raising concerns about whether the plutonium will be used for weapons.

A PHWR also produces small amounts of plutonium, but it is not easily accessible because it lies inside spent fuel, which is highly radioactive. An FBR, however, requires plutonium as part of its fuel mix, which means India needs plutonium-handling facilities, and at these facilities it will have access to streams of at least reactor-grade plutonium. The U.S. revealed in 1977 that reactor-grade plutonium can be used in a nuclear weapon. For added measure, the PFBR also falls outside the purview of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

While the reactor represents a great technological feat, albeit one that took too long to fructify, it exists now in a political context that resists assiduous public accounting precisely when the nuclear power programme needs to be all the more accountable – while promising more energy in a world where energy has become its own battleground.

Bihar's saffron face

Samrat Choudhary

As Nitish Kumar is likely to resign this week, the Deputy Chief Minister is the frontrunner to be the BJP's first Chief Minister of the State

Amarnath Tewary

When Nitish Kumar, Bihar's Chief Minister for over two decades, took oath as a member of the Rajya Sabha in Delhi on April 10, speculation intensified over his successor.

Among the contenders, Samrat Choudhary, 57, Deputy Chief Minister and former State BJP president, has emerged as the frontrunner. However, party leaders say a final decision will be made only after Mr. Kumar resigns, likely on April 14. A new government is expected to be formed the following day, April 15. Mr. Choudhary currently holds the key Home portfolio and has been closely shadowing BJP leaders as well as Mr. Kumar at official engagements across the State.

Like his father, Shakuni Choudhary, a former Army man-turned-politician, Samrat Choudhary has switched several parties in the past, including the Rashtriya Janata Dal and Janata Dal (United), before joining the BJP in 2017. Since then, his rise within the party ranks has been swift. He served as Deputy Chief Minister alongside Vijay Kumar Sinha in the previous Bihar government and retained the post in the new administration formed in 2025 after winning the Tarapur seat in Munger district.

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

In 2023, Mr. Choudhary was appointed the BJP's Bihar unit president and has since emerged as a key voice in the State's coalition-driven politics. He is widely seen as a prominent OBC face from the Koeri-Kushwaha community within the party, a group that accounts for roughly 6-7% of Bihar's population.

After joining the BJP in 2017, Mr. Choudhary emerged as one of the sharpest critics of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. In 2022, he publicly vowed not to remove his trademark saffron turban until he unseated Mr. Kumar. However, when the BJP reunited with the JD(U) in January 2024 to return to power under the NDA, and Mr. Choudhary became Deputy Chief Minister, he visited Ayodhya on July 3, 2024. There, he removed his turban, dedicated it to Lord Rama, shaved his head and took a dip in the Saryu river. During the 2025 Assembly election, the BJP's central leadership consistently kept Mr. Choudhary at the forefront of its campaign, positioning him ahead of other State leaders. Recently, he was deployed to campaign in West Bengal, where his appearances alongside senior leaders – including the Chief Minister of Haryana and the Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh – fuelled speculation that he could be the party's leading choice for the top post in Bihar.

Larger role

During his recently concluded *Samriddhi Yatra* across the State, Nitish Kumar appeared to signal that Mr. Choudhary could take on a larger role going forward. On April 10, when Mr. Kumar took oath as a Rajya Sabha member in Delhi, Mr. Choudhary accompanied him along with other leaders. Meanwhile, in Patna, a poster at the party headquarters projected Mr. Choudhary as the next Chief Minister. It was later removed by party workers and leaders.

Mr. Choudhary entered active politics in 1990 and, the same year, was sworn in as Agriculture Minister in the Rabri Devi government led by the RJD. He won Assembly elections from Parbatta in 2000 and 2010 as an RJD candidate, and in 2010 served as the Opposition's chief whip in the State Assembly. In 2014, he joined the JD(U) and became Minister for Housing and Urban Development in the government led by Jitan Ram Manjhi. He moved to the BJP in 2017.

Mr. Choudhary has also courted controversy at various points in his political career. Prashant Kishor, founder of the Jan Suraaj Party, has alleged that Mr. Choudhary was named in a murder case and had misrepresented his age. He has also drawn attention for a mispronunciation of the word "affidavit" as "halfidavit".

Some within political circles remain sceptical about his elevation, arguing that he does not come from the BJP's traditional organisational base. Ultimately, the decision will hinge on alliance dynamics, caste equations and the BJP's long-term strategy in Bihar. While other BJP leaders such as SC & ST Welfare Minister Lakhendra Kumar Raushan are also being discussed for the top post, Mr. Choudhary continues to be seen as the frontrunner.

RIYADH

Pakistan sends fighter jets under defence pact, says Saudi Arabia

AFP

Pakistan has sent fighter jets and other military forces to Saudi Arabia to boost security under a defence pact, the Saudi Defence Ministry said on Saturday. Riyadh and Islamabad signed a mutual defence pact in September 2025, committing both sides to treat any aggression against either country as an attack on both. REUTERS

LONDON

U.K. pauses its plan to cede Chagos Islands after Trump's opposition

REUTERS

Britain's government said on Saturday it had put on hold its deal to cede sovereignty of the Chagos Islands — home to the U.S.-British Diego Garcia air base — which has been criticised by U.S. President Donald Trump. Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office said London would try to persuade Washington to give its approval. REUTERS

SAN DIEGO

Artemis II astronauts return to earth after voyage around moon

REUTERS

An elated NASA late Friday was celebrating its successful voyage around the Moon, after four astronauts safely returned to Earth having completed the first lunar flyby in more than 50 years. The NASA spacecraft carrying four astronauts splashed down without a hitch off the California coast. AFP

MOSCOW

Ukraine attacked Kursk, Belgorod regions: Russian regional officials

REUTERS

Governors of two Russian border regions said Ukrainian drones had attacked targets in the Kursk and Belgorod regions, injuring five persons. The attacks were reported after a 32-hour Orthodox Easter ceasefire went into effect. Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the ceasefire on Thursday. REUTERS

Hezbollah slams Lebanese talks with Israel as strikes kill at least 10

Hezbollah calls such talks a 'violation of Lebanon's national pact, Constitution, and laws'; Lebanese President says officials from Lebanon, Israel, and U.S. to meet in Washington to discuss truce; Beirut seeks Israeli troop withdrawal from Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah on Saturday reiterated his group's rejection of direct negotiations between Israel and Lebanon, where authorities reported 10 people killed in Israeli attacks in the south.

The office of Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said on Friday that officials from his country, Israel and the United States would meet next week in Washington "to discuss declaring a ceasefire and the start date for negotiations between Lebanon and Israel under U.S. auspices".

Strong dissent: Demonstrators carry portraits of Hassan Nasrallah during a protest in Beirut, Lebanon on Saturday. REUTERS

Beirut is seeking the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanese territory, while Israel has framed the talks as a step towards formally establishing peace with Lebanon, with which it has technically been at war for decades.

Mr. Aoun had repeatedly expressed readiness for direct talks ever since Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the West Asia war on March 2 with rocket fire at Israel in support of its backer Iran, sparking massive Israeli strikes and a ground invasion.

In the coastal city of Sidon, meanwhile, hundreds of people attended a funeral procession on Saturday for 13 State Security personnel who were killed the day before in Israeli strikes that hit their office in Nabatiyeh in the south.

Hezbollah MP Fadlallah said the decision to hold direct talks with Israel was "a blatant violation of the (national) pact, the Constitution and Lebanese laws".

The move "exacerbates domestic divisions at a time when Lebanon most needs solidarity and internal unity to face Israel's aggression and preserve civil peace", he added in a statement.

Israeli ambassador to the United States Yechiel Leiter has said his country "agreed to begin formal peace negotiations" with the Lebanese government, but "refused to discuss a ceasefire with the Hezbollah".

After a ceasefire was announced between the U.S. and Iran this week, the two sides have been at odds over whether it also applies to Lebanon, while Israel has kept up heavy strikes.

U.S. warships transit Strait of Hormuz 'to clear mines'

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Safe pathway: Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer *USS Frank E. Petersen* sails in the Arabian Sea on March 18. FILE PHOTO

Two U.S. Navy warships have transited the Strait of Hormuz at the start of an operation to clear the strategic waterway of mines laid by Iran, U.S. Central Command said on Saturday.

The announcement – which marks the first such transit since the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran began – came shortly after President Donald Trump said Washington had started "clearing out" the strait, through which a fifth of the world's crude oil passes.

"Today, we began the process of establishing a new passage and we will share this safe pathway with the maritime industry soon to encourage the free flow of commerce," said CENTCOM commander Admiral Brad Cooper.

The *USS Frank E. Peterson* and the *USS Michael Murphy* are the guided-missile destroyers involved in the operation, but CENTCOM said that "additional U.S. forces including underwater drones" could join the effort in coming days.

"We're now starting the process of clearing out the Strait of Hormuz," Mr. Trump said on his Truth Social platform, calling it "a favour" to countries such as China, Japan and France that "don't have the Courage or Will to do this work themselves". He insisted that Iran is "LOSING BIG!" in the conflict.

Gaza civil defence says Israeli strikes kill seven overnight

Agence France-Presse
DEIR EL-BALAH

Gaza's civil defence agency reported on Saturday that Israeli air strikes in the Palestinian territory had killed seven persons overnight, with the military saying it had struck an "armed terrorist cell".

Despite an October 10 ceasefire, Gaza remains gripped by daily violence as both the Israeli military and Hamas accuse one another of breaching the truce.

Mahmoud Bassal, spokesperson for Gaza's civil defence agency, which operates as a rescue service under Hamas, said an Israeli drone had fired two missiles close to a police post in the Al-Bureij refugee camp.

In addition to the seven dead, he said, several more people were wounded, four of them critically.

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in central Gaza said it had received six bodies and seven wounded, "including four in a critical condition because of direct impacts to the face, torso and other parts of the body".

The nearby Al-Awda hospital said it had received one fatality and two wounded.

Holy fire

Celebrating victory: Christian Orthodox pilgrims hold up candles during the Holy Fire ceremony at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the site in the Old City of Jerusalem where, according to tradition, Jesus was crucified and buried, on Saturday. AP

Kim backs China's push for 'multipolar world' in discussions

Associated Press
SEOUL

Kim Jong-un

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un voiced support for China's push to build a "multipolar world" and called for deeper ties between the traditional allies during a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, state media said on Saturday.

During the meeting Friday, Mr. Kim said his government will fully support Chinese efforts to achieve territorial integrity based on its "one-China principle," a reference to Beijing's official position that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory, according to North Korea's official *KCNA*.

Mr. Wang, on a two-day trip to North Korea, said the countries' relations were entering a "new phase" following a summit last year.

Concerns emerge over process as Nepal PM Balendra Shah pushes ahead

NEWS ANALYSIS

Sanjeev Satgainya
KATHMANDU

Nepalese have not heard Prime Minister Balendra Shah speak since March 27, when he took the oath of office, following the first election since last year's Gen Z protests. His silence has stood out as his government, still in its early days, prioritised rapid action over communication and consultation.

Within hours of its formation, the Shah government swung into action – in the name of "honouring the spirit and the mandate of the people", with an emphasis on speed. On March 28, former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and former Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak were arrested over alleged negligent killings during the September protests. More arrests followed. Some members of the business community were detained for questioning in money laundering cases.

The government also unveiled an ambitious 100-day action plan. Its goals ranged from abolishing political student unions in universities to pushing constitutional amendments and economic reforms.

Two weeks into his tenure, Mr. Shah, a senior leader of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) that won the March 5 elections in a landslide, has not made any public statement. He did not address even the first meeting of the newly elected Parliament.

In what seemed to be an attempt to downplay criticism, RSP chair Rabi Lamichhane, while addressing the April 1 Parliament session, said the government's priorities, plans, and direction will be presented by the Prime Minister through actions, "speaking when necessary, and working silently when not".

Taking charge: Balendra Shah arrives to attend the Parliament session in Kathmandu on April 2. AFP

Stress on institutions

Analysts, however, say a non-consultative, steamroller approach with excessive focus on speed could undermine democratic norms and place stress on institutions. "Democracy means governance, and governance requires upholding due process," said Krishna Gyawali, a former senior bureaucrat. "People voted for the RSP for change. But anything achieved by bypassing established procedures does not bring lasting and meaningful reform."

The March 5 elections were triggered by last year's Gen Z protests against corruption and misgovernance. The youth called for clean governance and accountability. At least 76 people died, including 19 in police firing on the first day, September 8, when Mr. Oli was Prime Minister. The RSP won a near two-thirds majority with "visible change and good governance with accountability" as its rallying cry. The rapid rollout of its 100-day plan suggests it had prepared its agenda in advance. But making plans and executing them are two different things, observers say, especially under political pressure to deliver quickly.

"This government is under extreme pressure to deliver, which makes most of its actions performative," said Mahesh Kushwaha, a PhD candidate in International Security at the School of Law and Government, Dublin City University. "Many of these actions are driven – or at least influenced – by public perception on social media, which is dangerous."

Home Minister Sudhan Gurung, a key figure in Gen Z protests, appeared overzealous in the early days, posting publicly about arrests. Prime Minister Shah himself is not fond of two-way interactions, with most of his earlier communications taking place via social media.

Some say as long as the government performs and delivers – and addresses people's immediate concerns – it is acceptable. But others argue that communication and consultation remain essential to democratic governance. "Many decisions seem to have been made without adequate internal deliberation," said Mr. Gyawali.

Public resentment

A decision to scrap bridge courses and entrance preparation classes did not go down well with all. The plan to disband political student unions has also stirred debates.

The current government's foundation lies not just on the RSP's popularity, but largely on public resentment with the old guard. While on the delivery front, the government's moves with pace risk stressing institutions, actions against politicians, if not carefully grounded in procedural fairness, are being seen by some as vengeance.

The release of Mr. Oli and Mr. Lekhak on April 9 as per a Supreme Court order has strengthened the argument that the arrests were driven by vendetta. Mr. Oli, 74, said in a statement he had been "detained without sufficient grounds" and that the case against him was driven by "vindictiveness."

Meanwhile, arrest warrants have been issued against former PM Sher Bahadur Deuba and his wife Arzu on alleged corruption charges. Mr. Deuba, 79, who is abroad for medical treatment, has rejected the charges, calling them "false propaganda." Mr. Gautam says the government's real test will begin once challenges hit home hard. "In its initial days, it is focused on speed," he said. "I have not seen anything that the government has done to respond to emerging challenges."

ADMIRABLE QUALITY

Calm and collected Samson has shades of Dhoni, says Simons

B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

M.S. Dhoni is one of the calmest cricketers I've ever come across. And Sanju Samson is not that far behind. I've seen no panic, no sense of practising more, doing more...maybe even less. When you've got a player like him, you know it's just temporary if he has a bad run — CSK bowling coach Eric Simons.

DEBUT TO REMEMBER

Playing on his home turf, CSK's Gurjapneet strikes first ball

B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Gurjapneet Singh made a sparkling debut for Chennai Super Kings when he struck off his first delivery in the league, removing Delhi Capitals' Axar Patel. The visiting skipper was pouched brilliantly by a diving Sarfaraz Khan at backward point. The Tamil Nadu left-arm seamer finished with figures of 4-0-39-1.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Kishan rues Sunrisers bowlers' inability to execute their plans

SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

The way we started with the bat, we could have ended up with 250. But these things happen. Priyansh Arya and Prabhsimran Singh did well and had the PowerPlay on their side. I feel we were not good at executing our plans. T20 cricket is all about bowling good deliveries, but we lacked it today — SRH skipper Ishan Kishan.

POWER PLAY

Abhishek and Head put on their fifth century partnership in IPL

SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

There have been 19 century stands by openers in the IPL. Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head account for five, while no other pair has more than one. Sunrisers Hyderabad is the only team to score more than 100 in the PowerPlay multiple times (3). Kolkata Knight Riders and Chennai Super Kings (one each) are the other teams to do it.

Samson, Overton help Super Kings break the duck

The flamboyant opener puts on an exhibition with an unbeaten century against Capitals; the Englishman bags a stunning four-wicket haul; Mhatre does his bit in the 113-run second-wicket stand

IPL-19

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

It was what Chennai Super Kings' faithful was waiting for ever since Sanju Samson made a headline-grabbing move to the five-time champion from Rajasthan Royals for this season.

After three low scores, Samson finally came good and sent the crowd into delirium with a sparkling unbeaten 115 (56b, 15x4, 4x6) to help Super Kings beat Delhi Capitals by 23 runs at the MAC Stadium on Saturday.

Samson found good support from Ayush Mhatre (59, 36b, 3x4, 4x6), who scored his second half-century of the season. Their 113-run stand for the second wicket propelled the home team to 212 for two after it was asked to bat.

In reply, Pathum Nissanka (41 off 24 balls) got Capitals off to a flier as he carted the CSK pacers around the park, taking his team past 50 in the fourth over.

The host, however, pulled things back when Khaleel Ahmed removed K.L. Rahul by coming around the wicket and bouncing the opener out. Khaleel's pace partner Anshul Kamboj corrected his length by going fuller and forced Nissanka to hit straight to mid-on.

Jamie Overton (4-0-18-4) struck twice in his first two overs, using the bounce of the red-soil surface to remove the dangerous Sameer Rizvi and David Miller to put CSK on top.

While Tristan Stubbs (60, 38b, 4x4, 3x6) played a valiant knock, the home team kept chipping away at the other end. In his final over, Overton fittingly accounted for Stubbs to pave the way for the Men in Yellow's first win of IPL 2026.

Earlier, Samson relied on sound fundamentals like decisive footwork and a still head to pepper the boundaries at will. The Kerala batter cut, flicked and went down the ground regally against the pacers. Against Axar Patel, the opener moved towards the leg-side to free his arms and hit the left-arm spinner twice over covers, as CSK managed 61 in the PowerPlay.

In the 11th over, Samson cut loose, depositing a juicy full toss from T. Natarajan over midwicket for the first maximum of the game. From there on, the 31-year-old spared none, lofting Kuldeep Yadav over extra cover, pulling Natarajan and launching Lungi Ngidi through midwicket en route his fourth IPL century.

Could this be the start of a revival for both Samson and CSK?

Yellow army: Samson was at his destructive best and found an able ally in Mhatre before Overton put the skids on the Capitals chase. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SCOREBOARD

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Sanju Samson (not out) 115 *(56b, 15x4, 4x6)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad c Nissanka b Axar 15 *(18b, 1x4)*, Ayush Mhatre retired out 59 *(36b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Shivam Dube (not out) 20 *(10b, 2x4, 1x6)*; Extras (w-3): 3; Total (for two wkts in 20 overs): 212.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-62 (Ruturaj, 6.2 overs), 2-175 (Mhatre, 17.3).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Nabi 2-0-17-0, Mukesh 4-0-37-0, Axar 4-0-39-1, Natarajan 4-0-54-0, Ngidi 4-0-41-0, Kuldeep 2-0-24-0.

DELHI CAPITALS
Pathum Nissanka c Brevis b Kamboj 41 *(24b, 5x4, 2x6)*, K.L. Rahul c Overton b Khaleel 18 *(10b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Sameer Rizvi c Brevis b Overton 6 *(9b, 1x4)*, Axar Patel c Sarfaraz b Gurjapneet 1 *(2b)*, David Miller b Overton 17 *(14b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Tristan Stubbs c Noor b Overton 60 *(38b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Ashutosh Sharma **(Impact Player for Mukesh)** c Kamboj b Noor 19 *(10b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Aquib Nabi c Akeal b Overton 4 *(2b, 1x4)*, Kuldeep Yadav c Brevis b Kamboj 4 *(7b)*, Lungi Ngidi c Gurjapneet b Kamboj 3 *(5b)*, T. Natarajan (not out) 1 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-3, w-11): 15; Total (in 20 overs): 189.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-61 (Rahul, 4.6), 2-61 (Nissanka, 5.2), 3-66 (Axar, 6.1), 4-76 (Rizvi, 7.6), 5-121 (Miller, 12.2), 6-149 (Ashutosh, 14.5), 7-154 (Nabi, 15.4), 8-183 (Stubbs, 18.3), 9-185 (Kuldeep, 19.1).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Akeal **(Impact Player for Mhatre)** 2-0-20-0, Khaleel 3-0-40-1, Kamboj 4-0-35-3, Gurjapneet 4-0-39-1, Overton 4-0-18-4, Noor 3-0-36-1.

Toss: Capitals.
PoM: Samson.
Chennai Super Kings won by 23 runs.

Next assignment

CSK: April 14 vs. KKR Chennai, 7.30 p.m.

DC: April 18 vs. RCB Bengaluru, 3.30 p.m.

Priyansh, Prabhsimran and Shreyas star for Kings

Sankar Narayanan E.H.
NEW CHANDIGARH

Just hours after the Artemis II crew splashed down from their historic journey around the moon, a few willow-wielders took guard at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh Stadium as if they were determined to send some cricket balls back into the lunar orbit.

A mammoth 442 runs were plundered by the Sunrisers Hyderabad and Punjab Kings batters. At the end, it was PBKS which triumphed by six wickets on Saturday.

Abhishek Sharma's 28-ball 74 (5x4, 8x6) provided the launchpad for SRH's 219 for six. However, Priyansh Arya (57, 20b, 5x4, 5x6), Prabhsimran Singh (51, 25b, 4x4, 4x6) and Shreyas Iyer (69 n.o., 33b, 5x4, 5x6) ensured PBKS remained unbeaten in IPL 2026.

SRH left-arm wrist-spinner Shivang Kumar bowled with gumption (4-0-33-3) and prised out PBKS' top-three, but the damage had been done before he was introduced in the seventh over.

While Abhishek's half-century came off 18 balls, Priyansh's was two deliveries faster. It took the SRH openers 3.4 overs to breach the 50-run mark; their counterparts did it in 3.3.

The blistering start made the rest of the run chase a formality as skipper Shreyas took the side home with seven deliveries to spare.

Earlier, Arshdeep Singh's 10-ball second over went for 24 runs, where Abhishek punished anything in his arc with elan.

Part-time bowler Shashank Singh proved to be the unlikely partnership-breaker after the 105-run PowerPlay.

The gentle medium-pacer repaid the faith shown by Shreyas by having Travis Head (38, 23b, 5x4, 1x6) and Abhishek caught in the deep. After being 120 for no loss in eight overs, the SRH innings lost momentum.

Arshdeep's 14th over saw two contrasting fielding efforts.

While Marcus Stoinis dropped Heinrich Klaasen at long-off, Marco Jansen ran to his right and plucked the ball out of thin air with his outstretched right hand to send back Ishan Kishan.

The nonchalance of the whole exercise saw Arshdeep cover his mouth and sit down in disbelief, though the crowd's reaction was to stand up and applaud.

Later, Klaasen tossed his bat in the air out of frustration after his scratchy innings (39, 33b, 1x4, 1x6). Perhaps he knew that his knock would come back to haunt his team.

The PBKS willow-wielders made sure of it.

Architects: Shashank was the man with the golden arm while Prabhsimran set the tone with the bat. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Abhishek Sharma c Arshdeep b Shashank 74 *(28b, 5x4, 8x6)*, Travis Head c Bartlett b Shashank 38 *(23b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Ishan Kishan c Jansen b Arshdeep 27 *(17b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Heinrich Klaasen c Connolly b Bartlett 39 *(33b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Aniket Verma run out 18 *(9b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Salil Arora c Bartlett b Arshdeep 9 *(8b, 1x6)*, Nitish Kumar (not out) 0 *(1b)*, Harsh Dubey (not out) 1 *(2b)*; Extras (b-1, nb-1, w-11): 13; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 219.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-120 (Head, 8.1 overs), 2-122 (Abhishek, 8.3), 3-169 (Kishan, 13.6), 4-195 (Aniket, 16.4), 5-214 (Salil, 18.5), 6-218 (Klaasen, 19.4).

KINGS BOWLING
Arshdeep 4-0-50-2, Bartlett 4-0-42-1, Jansen 4-0-40-0, Vyshak 2-0-33-0, Shashank 3-0-20-2, Chahal 3-0-33-0.

PUNJAB KINGS
Priyansh Arya c Nitish b Shivang 57 *(20b, 5x4, 5x6)*, Prabhsimran Singh c Klaasen b Shivang 51 *(25b, 4x4, 4x6)*, Cooper Connolly c Aniket b Shivang 11 *(12b, 1x4)*, Shreyas Iyer (not out) 69 *(33b, 5x4, 5x6)*, Nehal Wadhera **(Impact Player for Chahal)** b Harsh 14 *(14b, 1x6)*, Shashank Singh (not out) 16 *(9b, 1x4, 1x6)*; Extras (w-5): 5; Total (for four wkts. in 18.5 overs): 223.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-99 (Priyansh, 6.2), 2-117 (Prabhsimran, 8.5), 3-128 (Connolly, 10.2), 4-197 (Wadhera, 16.1).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Harsh 4-0-38-1, Unadkat **(Impact Player for Head)** 3-0-40-0, Malinga 3-0-46-0, Harshal 2-0-39-0, Shivang 4-0-33-3, Nitish 2-0-20-0, Abhishek 0.5-0-7-0.

Toss: PBKS.
PoM: Shreyas.
Kings won by six wickets with seven balls to spare.

Next assignment

PBKS: April 16 vs. MI Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

SRH: April 13 vs. RR Hyderabad, 7.30 p.m.

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	4	4	0	0	8	2.055
Punjab Kings	4	3	0	1	7	0.720
Royal Challengers	3	2	1	0	4	1.231
Delhi Capitals	4	2	2	0	4	0.322
Lucknow Super Giants	3	2	1	0	4	-0.359
Sunrisers Hyderabad	4	1	3	0	2	-0.024
Gujarat Titans	3	1	2	0	2	-0.270
Mumbai Indians	3	1	2	0	2	-0.715
Chennai Super Kings	4	1	3	0	2	-1.532
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	0	3	1	1	-1.315

Flying high: Shreyas ensured Kings maintained their unbeaten run this season. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

SNAPSHOTS

Maiden title wins for Sujeet and Abhimanyu

BISHKEK (KYRGYZSTAN): Sujeet Kalkal (65kg) and Abhimanyu Mandwal (70kg) secured maiden titles at the Asian wrestling on Saturday.

Aman Sehrawat (61kg) and Mukul Dahiya (86kg) reached the finals. Indian freestyle wrestlers bagged four medals. Sujeet won 8-1 over Umidjon Jalolov. Abhimanyou shocked Tomor-Ochiryn Tulga 5-3. Sandeep Singh Mann lost 1-2 to Keyvan Gharehdaghi in the 79kg final while Ankush (57kg) beat Japan's Fuga Sasaki 8-2 for a bronze.

Aman, who jumped from 57kg to 61kg, defeated Korea's Kim Changsu 11-0 and Iran's Ahmad Masoud 11-9 on his way to final.

Sujeet.

Indian archers falter

PUEBLA (MEXICO): Indian archers could not qualify for medal rounds at World Cup Stage-1. Jyothi Surekha lost to Dafne Quintero 143-149 in compound quarterfinals.

India u-17 women go down to Russia

SOCHI (RUSSIA): The Indian u-17 women's team lost 0-4 to Russia in the first of three friendlies on Saturday.

The result: Russia 4 (Valeria Menyailova 44, Dana Dobrovitskaya 57-pen, Alisa Klimova 72-pen, Angelina Gulyayeva 88).

Rich haul by Indian youth paddlers

SHIMLA: India clinched 10 gold medals on Saturday at the South Asian youth table tennis championships. The tournament is also a qualifier for Asian youth championships.

The results (all finals):
Boys: U-19: Priyanuj Bhattacharyya bt Punit Biswas 11-7, 6-11, 11-7, 11-6; **Doubles:** M.R. Balamurugan/ Mehan Senthil bt Abul Hsib/ Nafiz Iqbal (Ban) 9-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-5; **U-15:** Aditya Das bt Akshay Kirikara 11-6, 11-6, 11-6; **Doubles:** Rishaan Chattopadhyay/ Akash Rajavelu (Ind) bt Reevan Bajracharya/ Nischal Thapa (Nep) 8-11, 13-11, 9-11, 11-1, 11-4.

Girls: U-19: Jennifer Varghese bt Ananya Muralidharan 7-11, 11-9, 11-8, 11-6; **Doubles:** Prisha Goel/ Ditsa Roy bt Binaca Rai/ Evaana Thapa (Nep) 11-5, 11-9, 13-11.

U-15: Ankolika Chakraborty bt Aahona Ray 12-10, 15-13, 8-11, 11-5; **Doubles:** Sreejani Chakraborty/ Tanishka Kalbhairav (Ind) bt Arsana Maharjan/ Suramya Shakya (Nep) 14-16, 11-5, 11-5, 11-4.

Mixed Doubles: U-19: Priyanuj Bhattacharyya/ Jennifer Vaarghese bt Mohammed Rafiu/ Fathimath Ali (Mdv) 12-10, 11-2, 11-5. **U-15:** Aditya Das/ Ankolika Chakraborty bt Mohammed Rafiu/ Aishath Nafiz (Mdv) 11-5, 11-4, 11-9.

RCB will aim to breach MI's fortress Wankhede

The major worry for the host is its bowling unit which is yet to click while the star-studded batting line-up has shown only flashes of brilliance; the Krunal vs Hardik duel adds an interesting sub-plot

IPL-19

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

When Mumbai Indians set off for back-to-back away fixtures 10 days ago, there was a sense of renewed optimism. The long-standing jinx of opening-game defeats had finally been broken, and the early signs hinted at momentum.

But as it returns to familiar surroundings for Sunday night's marquee Indian Premier League clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, the mood is likely more subdued than buoyant.

The tag of 'slow starters' has resurfaced. Hardik Pandya and Co. lost both their away games, and the concern is less about the batting star power and more about a bowling unit that is yet to click.

Across three matches, Mumbai Indians' bowlers have managed only 11 wickets combined – a telling statistic that underlines their struggles.

More worrying is that, barring Jasprit Bumrah and Mitchell Santner (who has featured in only one game), every other bowler has conceded at an economy rate in double digits.

That lack of control has inevitably placed additional pressure on the batting unit. While the batters have shown flashes of form, they have not quite managed to dominate on the road. Against that backdrop, defending champion Royal Challengers Bengaluru will sense an opportunity to breach the Wankhede Stadium fortress.

RCB's batting has largely been in rhythm, notwithstanding the middle-overs stutter against Rajasthan Royals on Friday night.

The return of Krunal Pandya to face his former franchise, with younger brother Hardik leading the opposition, adds an intriguing sub-plot to a contest already headlined by the ever-compelling Rohit Sharma-Virat Kohli duel.

Krunal's crafty left-arm spin played a key role in dragging RCB back into the contest after Vaibhav Suryavanshi's onslaught on Friday.

On a surface he knows well, the allrounder will be keen to build on that performance.

While MI will be fretting over Santner's fitness, RCB faces a selection call. Rookie pacer Abhinandan Singh has been expensive in the first three games, and the think-tank may consider turning to Rasikh Dar, last season's trusted death-overs option, for added control at the backend.

Practising hard: MI skipper Hardik will hope that his bowlers can back up the batting. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Today's matches

LSG vs GT	MI vs RCB
Lucknow, 3.30 p.m.	Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.
HEAD-TO-HEAD	HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 7	Played: 34
LSG 3 | GT 4	MI 19 | RCB 15
PREVIOUS MEETING	PREVIOUS MEETING
LSG won by 33 runs, 2025	RCB won by 12 runs, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & JIOHOTSTAR

In rapt attention: GT pacer Siraj during an interaction with head coach Nehra. R.V. MOORTHY

A clash between two resurgent outfits

M.R. Praveen Chandran
LUCKNOW

It was a week of resurrection for Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in IPL 2026 during the past week starting with the Easter. The Super Giants registered back-to-back wins after beginning their campaign with a loss to Delhi Capitals at home.

After winning two away matches against Sunrisers Hyderabad and Koltaka Knight Riders, respectively, Super Giants host Gujarat Titans at the Ekana Cricket Stadium on Sunday and will look to extend its newfound resurgence. However, Ekana Cricket Stadium is far from being a fortress for Super Giants where they won only two home matches last season. LSG will look to flip the script this time around.

LSG's explosive batting line-up is yet to fire at full throttle. The openers Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram haven't been able to convert their starts while Nicholas Pooran is still searching for a substantial score.

It was the individual brilliance of Rishabh Pant and rookie Mukul Choudhary that saw LSG pull off victories in its previous two matches. Skipper Pant will look for a collective effort from his side against the Titans. The in-form pacer Mohammed Shami also needs a little more support. Prince Yadav has oscillated from brilliant to mediocre. The spinners, Digvesh Rathi and Manimaran Siddharth, have bowled with control in the middle overs and will relish the slow surface at the venue.

The Titans too are searching for consistency and come into the match on the back of a thrilling win against Delhi Capitals. They have racked up 200-plus scores in their last two games. The Titans possess the batting firepower to dismantle any bowling attack. However, their bowling has been erratic. Rashid Khan's return to form augurs well for the Titans and he will hold the key.

Making it count: Vaishali, right, capitalised on an error by Goryachkina. FIDE

Vaishali extends her lead to one point

CANDIDATES CHESS

Divya did Vaishali a favour by holding her strongest rival and top seed Zhu Jiner to a draw

Sports Bureau

R. Vaishali maintained her sole lead in the Women's Candidates chess tournament by scoring a crucial win over Aleksandra Goryachkina in the 11th round at Pegeia, Cyprus, on Saturday. The victory took her tally to seven points, with just three rounds remaining.

Fellow-Indian Divya Deshmukh did Vaishali a favour by holding her strongest rival Zhu Jiner to a draw. The top seed from China now has six points and is sharing the second spot with Anna Muzychuk as the Chennai Grandmaster increased her lead to one point.

In a rook-and-minor-piece ending, it was a blunder with her bishop by Goryachkina that proved the turning point. Vaishali capitalised on that error and went an exchange up.

The Russian gave up, with checkmate not far away.

In the open section, Javokhir Sindarov maintained his commanding two-point lead after drawing with second seed Fabiano Caruana.

The 20-year-old Uzbek has eight points, while Anish Giri, who drew with Andrey Esipenko, has six. All the four games in the open section were drawn.

The results (11th round):
Anish Giri (Ned) 6.5 drew with Andrey Esipenko (Rus) 4; Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 5 drew with Wei Yi (Chn) 5; Fabiano Caruana (USA) 5.5 drew with Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) 8.5; R. Praggnanandhaa 4.5 drew with Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) 5.

Women: Kateryna Lagno (Rus) 5.5 drew with Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 6; Tan Zhongyi (Chn) 4 drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz) 5.5; Zhu Jiner (Chn) 6 drew with Divya Deshmukh 5; Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus) 5 lost to R. Vaishali 7.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 3.30 & 7.30 p.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 & 7.30 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 & JioHotstar, 6.30 & 9 p.m.
Golf: Augusta Masters, FanCode, 9.30 p.m.

India wins, but fails to make it to the playoffs

BJK CUP

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

A spirited show by Ankita Raina, an inspired win for Vaishnavi Adkar and a dominant display by the doubles duo of Ankita and Rutuja Bhosale helped India finish its Billie Jean Cup Asia/Oceania Group I campaign with a 2-1 victory against Korea on Saturday.

However, it wasn't enough as it was eliminated from the World Cup playoffs race.

India had to win 3-0 and hope for a similar result for Indonesia against Thailand in order to finish in the top two. The 2-1 verdict meant India, with three wins and two losses, remained in Group I and Korea finished fourth and was relegated to Group II along with Mongolia. Thailand defeated table-topper Indonesia 2-1 and took the top spot by virtue of its win.

The 33-year-old Ankita, the team's most experienced member, squandered opportunities to go down 1-6, 5-7 to Dayeon Back. Vaishnavi shocked the higher-ranked Sohyun Park 7-6(2), 7-6(5) to pull things level before Ankita and Rutuja sealed it with a 6-2, 6-2 win in 74 minutes.

After winning just one game in the first set, Ankita battled hard in the second. The drop shots that helped her stay in the contest also proved her undoing as Dayeon read them and smashed cross-court winners. Serving for the set at 5-3, Ankita lost the plot as her opponent reeled off the next four games.

The 383rd-ranked Vaishnavi overcame Sohyun, ranked 276th, in an intense two-hour 17-minute battle marked by frequent breaks of serve, long rallies and a medical timeout by the Indian.

Captain's pride: Vaishnavi celebrates her win with Vishal. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The results:
India bt Korea 2-1 [Ankita Raina lost to Dayeon Back 1-6, 5-7; Vaishnavi Adkar bt Sohyun Park 7-6(2), 7-6(5); Rutuja Bhosale & Ankita Raina bt Dayeon Back & Eunhye Lee 6-2, 6-2].
New Zealand bt Mongolia 3-0 [Aishi Das bt Khongorzul Aldarkhishig 6-0, 6-1; Monique Barry bt Jargal Altansarnai 6-1, 6-2; Erin Routliffe & Aishi Das bt Jargal Altansarnai & Anu-Vijn Gantor 6-1, 6-2].
Thailand bt Indonesia 2-1 [Priska Madelyn Nugroho lost to Thasaporn Naklo 3-2, retd.; Janice Tjen bt Anchisa Chanta 6-2, 6-4; Anchisa Chanta & Patcharin Cheapchandej bt Anjali Kirana Junarto & Meydiana Laviola Reinnamah 6-2, 6-4].

Arsenal hits Bournemouth speed-bump

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Arsenal suffered a huge blow in the Premier League title race on Saturday, losing 2-1 at home to Bournemouth to give Manchester City renewed hope.

The visitor took the lead through Junior Kroupi but Mikel Arteta's men levelled through a Viktor Gyokeres penalty later in first half.

Bournemouth was back in front in the 74th after a fluid move finished off by Alex Scott, who rifled the ball past David Raya.

Lamine Yamal set up two goals and scored another as Barcelona took a significant step towards defending its LaLiga title with a 4-1 derby win over Espanyol on Saturday.

Clinching it: Bournemouth's Scott fires in the winner against Arsenal. AP

Bayern's record

Bayern Munich broke a 54-year Bundesliga goalscoring record, with Leon Goretzka's 53rd-minute strike against St Pauli in a 5-0 win bringing the league leaders' tally to 102 goals this season.

Goretzka's goal bettered the mark of 101 set by the Bavarian giant in 1971-72 with a side featuring club legends Franz Beckenbauer, Gerd Mueller and Uli Hoeness.

The results:
Premier League: Arsenal 1 (Gyokeres 35-pen) lost to Bournemouth 2 (Kroupi 17, Scott 74); Brentford 2 (Thiago 3-pen, 76) drew with Everton 2 (Beto 26, Dewsbury-Hall 90+1); Burnley 0 lost to Brighton 2 (Wieffer 43, Wieffer 89); Liverpool 2 (Ngumoha 36, Salah 40) bt Fulham 0.

LaLiga: Real Sociedad 3 (Sucic 14, Sivera 27-og, Oskarsson 60) drew with Alaves 3 (Caleta-Car 3-og, Diabate 24, Boye 90+8); Elche 1 (Cepeda 73) bt Valencia 0; Barcelona 4 (Torres 9, 25, Yamal 87, Rashford 89) bt Espanyol 1 (Lozano 56).

Bundesliga: St Pauli 0 lost to Bayern Munich 5 (Musiala 9, Goretzka 53, Olise 54, Jackson 65, Guerreiro 89); Heidenheim 3 (Honsak 9, 36, Zivzivadze 79) bt Union Berlin 1 (Querfeld 75); Wolfsburg 1 (Pejcinovic 90+7) lost to Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Hojlund 21, Kalimuendo-Muinga 32); RB Leipzig 1 (Diomande 81) bt Borussia M'Gladbach 0; Borussia Dortmund 0 lost to Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Andrich 42).

On Friday: Premier League: West Ham 4 (Mavropanos 42, 83, Castellanos 66, 68) bt Wolves 0.

LaLiga: Real Madrid 1 (Valverde 51) drew with Girona 1 (Lemar 62).

Animesh completes a sprint double

Sheer delight: Animesh triumphed in the 100m dash, which was his first race after last year's World Championships. AFI

ATHLETICS

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

Animesh Kujur pipped Tamil Arasu in a photo finish to clinch the men's 100m title in the Indian Athletics Series-3 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Saturday. The 22-year-old, who holds the National record of 10.18s, clocked 10.28s. He also won the men's 200m event with a timing of 20.74s.

Animesh had an impressive 2025 season, becoming the first Indian male sprinter to qualify for the World Championships.

"It was a close race (100m), but this was the season-opener. This was my first race after last year's Worlds. I am happy with the 200m as well," he said. "My target this season is to do below 10s and below 20s in the 100m and 200m respectively."

Vishal T.K. starred in the men's 400m as the 22-year-old came first with a timing of 45.44s.

In men's javelin throw, Rohit Yadav clinched top position with 82.17m. Sachin Yadav, who was fourth in the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo last year, finished second with a best of 81.95m.

In women's 100m event, Nithya Gandhe emerged triumphant by sprinting to the finish line in 11.59s. Hima Das, who had been suspended by the NADA for a whereabouts failure in 2024, featured in women's 200m and 400m events after missing the 2025 season due to injury. She did not finish among the top three in either category.

The results (winners): Men: 100m: Animesh Kujur (Odisha), 10.28s; **200m:** Animesh Kujur (Odisha), 20.74s; **400m:** Vishal T.K. (NCOE, Thiruvananthapuram), 45.44s; **800m:** Anu Kumar (Uttarakhand), 1:49.87s; **10,000m:** Shailesh Kushwaha (Kar), 30:01.08s; **110m hurdles:** Muhammed Lazan (JSW), 14.23s; **400m hurdles:** Santosh Kumar (TN), 51.19s; **Long jump:** Mohd. Atta Sazid (Har), 7.86m; **Discus throw:** Abhimanyu (JSW), 56.75m; **Shot put:** Tajinderpal Singh Toor (Punjab), 21.03m; **Javelin throw:** Rohit Yadav (Railways), 82.17m.
Women: 100m: Nithya Gandhe (NCOE Trivandrum), 11.59s; **200m:** Priyanka Sikarwar (All India Police), 23.91s; **400m:** Rashdeep Kaur (Pun), 53.10s; **800m:** Astha Mallick (Delhi), 2:11.79s; **10,000m:** Babli Verma (UP), 35:08.20s; **100m hurdles:** Anjali C. (JSW), 13.58s; **400m hurdles:** Gudiya (U.P.), 59.23s; **Discus throw**: Seema (NCOE, Patiala), 59.55m; **Hammer throw:** Tanya Chaudhary (U.P.), 61.29m; **Shot put:** Shiksha (Reliance), 16.50m; **Javelin throw:** Shilpa Rani (Har), 54.29m; **High jump:** Pooja (Har), 1.90m; **Triple jump**: Niharika Vashisht (Pun), 13.41m; **Long jump**: Shaili Singh (UP), 6.24m.

Blasters stun BFC, record first win

Vital strike: Franchu, second left, scored the winner 12 minutes from time. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

ISL

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

A crowd in excess of 21,000, mostly comprising Bengaluru FC fans, was left stunned at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Saturday as Kerala Blasters handed BFC a 2-1 defeat, only the latter's second this Indian Super League season.

The hosts went ahead through an own goal in the 27th minute but played 65 minutes of regulation time with 10 men as midfielder Braian Sanchez was sent off for violent conduct.

Blasters took full advantage, with goals from Victor Bertomeu and Francisco Abalo (Franchu), earning the visitors only their first victory of the campaign (four points, 13th position) and also marking a sweet return to the Kanteerava after a decade for coach and BFC old hand Ashley Westwood.

Ironically, it was BFC (14 points, fourth) which had better chances. Winger Ryan Williams came close twice, having a shot saved in the first half and shooting over from close range in the second.

The opener came after sustained pressure when Williams' low cross from the right was turned in by defender Fallou Ndiaye before it could reach Sunil Chhetri.

But Blasters equalised when Rahul Bheke let a through-ball slip past him and Bertomeu slotted home on 60 minutes.

The winner was drilled in 12 minutes from time when Franchu turned Chinglensana Singh inside out and slipped the ball through goalie Gurpreet Singh Sandhu's legs.

Unlike in the past, the Blasters fans were not out in numbers, for they were reportedly upset at the club's nose-diving form. The ones who turned up were shunted to a corner, rendering them voiceless. But in the end, it was the BFC faithful who were left mum.

The results: Bengaluru FC 1 (Fallou Ndiaye-og 27) lost to Kerala Blasters FC 2 (Victor Bertomeu 60, Franchu 78).
At Chennai: Chennaiyin FC 1 (Irfan Yadwad 28) lost to East Bengal FC 3 (Edmund Lalrindika 7, Bipin Singh 83, Nandhakumar Sekar 90+6).

On a roll: Ayush capitalised on Vitidsarn's errors to book a meeting against Yu. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ayush shocks Vitidsarn, makes the title decider

The Indian rides on his superior attack and robust defence to script a sensational comeback win over the top seed and defending champ

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
NINGBO (CHINA)

India's Ayush Shetty stormed into the final with a stunning three-game win over top seed and defending champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand, assuring himself of at least a silver at the Badminton Asia Championships here on Saturday.

The World No. 25 rode on his superior attack and robust defence to script a sensational 10-21, 21-19, 21-17 comeback win over the Paris Olympics silver medallist and the 2023 World champion, in the semifinal that lasted 75 minutes.

He will meet Yu Qi Shi of China, who defeated Tien Chen Chou of Chinese Taipei 21-9, 21-13 in the other last-four clash.

Ayush also became the first Indian men's singles player after Dinesh Khanna to reach the final of the tournament. Dinesh had won gold at the continental event way back in 1965.

Vitidsarn dictated the early play with pace and precision, racing to a 4-0 lead with a body smash and maintaining a high tempo with sharp, angled returns.

The Thai mixed his strokes well and surged 11-5 ahead before cruising through the opening game with a flurry of smashes and disguised returns.

Ayush is the first Indian men's singles player after Dinesh Khanna to reach the final. Dinesh had won gold in 1965 Satwiksairaj and Chirag had clinched the doubles title in 2023

> I was unseeded and I went all the way. So in case of Ajush also, his ranking is fairly low. He is unseeded
> – DINESH KHANNA

After winning the second game, Ayush opened up a 4-1 lead and tightened his defence, retrieving returns he had missed earlier while keeping Vitidsarn under sustained pressure with aggressive play.

He read the opponent better, trusted his attack, and maintained a healthy cushion heading into the final interval.

From there on, Ayush took complete control. He repeatedly cramped Vitidsarn for space with his powerful smashes.

Blue Star beats Coorg Direwolves

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Blue Star HC defeated Coorg Direwolves 4-2 in the KSHA 'A' division hockey league in Bengaluru on Saturday.

The results: Blue Star 4 (Sundar Raj 13, Shaan 17, Jeevith 19, Sridhar 47) bt Coorg Direwolves 2 (Rohan 41, Belliappa 44).

McIlroy sizzles to a record six-shot Masters lead

Agence France-Presse
AUGUSTA

Rory McIlroy delivered one of the most incredible finishes in Major golf history with birdies on six of Friday's last seven holes to seize a record six-stroke lead after 36 holes at the Masters.

Defying fast and firm conditions at Augusta National, McIlroy fired a seven-under-par 65 in the second round to stand on 12-under-par 132 at the midpoint of the year's first major.

World number two McIlroy's closing run included holing out a spectacular 29-yard pitch at the par-four 17th hole and sinking a six-foot birdie putt at the 18th to break the old 36-hole record lead of five shots.

McIlroy sank seven-foot birdie putts at the par-three 12th and par-five 13th holes to start the epic run.

He added another from 10 feet at the par-five 15th and sank a three-foot birdie putt at the par-three 16th.

Then came the pitch-in stunner.

His impressive approach to six feet at 18 was followed by a clutch putt for his fourth straight birdie and Masters history.

Patrick Reed missed a six-foot putt and made bogey at 18 to shoot 69 and share a distant second with fellow American Sam Burns on 138.

England's Justin Rose and compatriot Tommy Fleetwood shared fourth on 139 with Ireland's Shane Lowry.

Unstoppable: Defying fast and firm conditions at Augusta National, McIlroy fired a seven-under-par 65 in the second round to stand on 12-under-par 132 at the midpoint of the year's first major. AP

Top scores (second round, par-72):

132: McIlroy 67-65; **138:** Reed 69-69, Burns 67-71; **139:** Rose 70-69, Fleetwood 71-68, Lowry 70-69; **140:** Day 69-71, Haotong 71-69, Reitan 72-68, Hatton 74-66, Clark 72-68, Young 73-67.

141: Koepka 72-69, Griffin 72-69, Gotterup 72-69; **142:** Homa 72-70, Knapp 73-69, Schauffele 70-72, Matsuyama 72-70.